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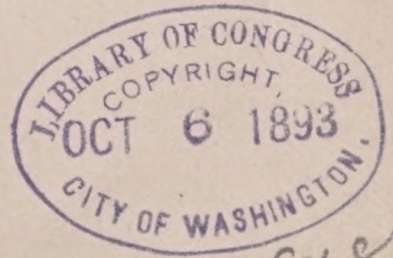
HOW THE GARDENS GREW.

BY

SARAH M. WILLIAMSON.

“ And what is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not been discovered.”

EMERSON.



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HOW THE GARDENS GREW.

CHAPTER I.

A MEETING OF FRIENDS.

Have a purpose in life, and having it, throw into your work such strength of mind and muscle as God has given you.—CARLYLE.

RICHARD MORRISON felt in a particularly good mood. These exalted moments came to him occasionally, and had a most invigorating influence upon his mind. His four years at Brown, and a subsequent term at a theological seminary in Illinois, had ended a fortnight previously in his ordination as a minister of the gospel. He was a young man, only twenty-five years of age, and as yet none of his ideals had been shattered. Some of these he was turning over in his mind when a cheerful voice broke in upon his revery:

“Where away, Dick?”

He turned around, not knowing at first whether to feel annoyed or pleased at the interruption. His face cleared when he saw who had accosted him.

“Ah, Desmond, how are you?” Their hands met in the cordial, strong clasp of men who have no doubts about each other’s acquaintance and liking. A separa-

tion of some years having intervened since their college friendship was cemented, doubtless added warmth to the pressure.

"By your leave, Morrison, I'll come over and make you keep me company."

"'Barkis is willin','" returned the other, as he placed his valise on the floor at his feet, and gave up the other half of the seat to his friend.

"Let me look at you awhile," said the new-comer. After a kindly, yet thorough glance, that took in the young clergyman from his crisp, brown hair and dark eyes to his trim attire and clerical tie, he added:

"No change in you, I see, Dick,—still *Le bon homme* Richard."

"And you are still the same merry Clyde," returned his friend. "How curious it seems that we should meet to-day on this train."

"Why more curious on this train than another?"

"Well, because it was rather against my will that I am here at all. Some friends persuaded me. I am glad enough now, for there is nobody I should have been happier to fall in with than yourself."

"Ditto, my dear boy. And now tell me where you have been keeping yourself all these years—what you are doing, etc., etc. I am sure of one thing," again glancing at the other's clerical attire, "I am surely right in fancying you the Reverend Richard Morrison, pastor of—what church?"

The Reverend Mr. Morrison blushed. He possessed

a fair complexion, easily colored, and was still enough of a boy in spite of his quarter of a century to be bashful in reference to his new dignity. His companion was soon put in full possession of his history since their parting. Part of this we know.

"I am called now," he concluded, "to the city as assistant pastor of the First Church. My duties will chiefly be with the missions connected with the church. There are several of them, one in particular established by a young artist who is interested in such things, having a large attendance from the denizens of the south side of the city. I have not yet visited the scenes of my labors, but all this was told me by my friends yesterday in town. Desmond, you don't know the amount of enthusiasm I feel in regard to entering this field. I can't express it. While in the East, the 'slumming' craze was at its height and I was drawn right into it. Don't you think this line of work can be pursued out here?"

The other deliberated a moment before replying.

"You won't find the grinding poverty out here that prevails in the East. Those found subject to it are mainly individual cases. The masses of the lower classes, as a rule, have at least enough to eat and wear."

"But ignorance?"

"With the public schools in easy reach, they can't be wholly ignorant of mere book learning."

"That isn't what I mean. There are more things than reading and writing of which one may be ignorant."

This discussion, upon a topic which to both was of the closest interest, might have been interminably prolonged, but a young man entered the car, and tapping Clyde upon the shoulder, said :

“I leave you here, Desmond. I am sorry I could not have seen more of you to-day, but you will be in town to-morrow, will you not ?”

There was no time for more than an affirmative nod from Clyde before the other got off at the station and the train again started.

“That youth looked as if he had a history,” observed Morrison.

“He has. I’ll tell it to you sometime. A noisy train is not exactly fitted for the recital of a confidential story.”

“What is his name ?”

“Dale—John Dale.”

At the next station, Mr. Morrison seized his valise and arose. Desmond rose also. “Get out here ? So do I.”

They stepped off the train and, without waiting for a cab, took their way along the road leading up the hill. It was here that Clyde related the story of the young man on the train whose face had taken such a hold upon the minister’s mind. By the time it was finished, the two had reached a point in their journey where they decided to stop and rest for a brief space. It was a lovely spot. In the foreground were the endless hills ; in the background, hills again, surmounted by gigantic trees ; above all, the cloudless sky

"This is my favorite sketching place," observed Desmond.

"Yes? I have heard of you, Clyde. Somebody is growing famous."

"Newspaper talk, all of it."

"Some basis for it, surely. You must show me your studio some day, Clyde. Don't you know, old fellow the boys never could fathom your reasons for leaving college. Then we heard of your going abroad, and your later return, setting up a studio in this town."

"My uncle failed," said Clyde, briefly. He was always loath to speak of that period in his life.

"But I always understood that your father had left you money quite independently of that you had from your uncle." Morrison did not intend to force the other's confidences. He was simply interested in all relating to his friend.

"It was all in the same 'spec.' When one went under, the whole was lost. The poor old man was awfully cut up about it, and only survived his failure a few months. I had to do something for myself, of course. The only talent I had, you know, was drawing and painting. At first I did illustrating for the papers. That gave me the opportunity of going abroad. That is all. You know the rest."

They tramped on a few paces in silence. Then Clyde spoke:

"I must leave you here, I suppose," he said. "But before we part, might I ask your object—or that of any

respectable clergyman—in coming to this outlandish section of our country? A pleasure jaunt, or a search for parishioners?”

Morrison laughed.

“I scarcely know how it came about,” he said. “I have some friends in town whose daughter attends that seminary whose walls you see a short distance ahead. To-day is Commencement Day, and she reads the valedictory, or some essay—I am not quite sure what it is. Her father’s business precluded his presence, and the illness of her little brother prevented the mother’s coming. I was there at dinner last evening, and Mr. Rathbone asked me to go over, take in the affair, and let the folks at home know just how Lucy got along.”

“How would it be to take me with you?”

“You’re quizzing, aren’t you? Could anybody in his sober senses stand the ‘sweet girl graduate,’ the blue-ribbed essays, the piano solos, etc.? If so, come.”

“Will it be in order?”

“Oh, yes. The principal is a cousin of mine; and, taking it for granted that your character is the same as in our college days, I’ll guarantee you.”

“So be it.”

CHAPTER II.

AMONG THE FORTY.

You may upset a man's reasonings, . . . but a brave Christian life you can't upset, it will tell.—HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

THE advent of two good-looking young strangers, both of a rather *distingué* appearance, in the hall where the commencement exercises were holding, you may be sure caused quite a flutter within the hearts of most of the younger portion of the gathering. Their having walked so slowly, lingering upon the way, caused them to be late, and the programme was well under way when Richard and Clyde entered the hall. All the seats were taken, but they did not mind standing. Indeed, the former took speedy occasion to whisper: "We can get out quite easily, can't we? It is not likely that we will care to see the whole thing through."

By the aid of his recollections, and of a photograph shown him the previous day, Mr. Morrison soon singled out the maiden whose efforts in the declamation line he was bound to notice. Many a time, however, his gaze wandered to a stately, blue-eyed young woman who at the moment of his entrance had just risen to read her essay. After hearing the title, nothing out of the common to the ex-collegian's ears, being nothing more or less than "Ambition," he had resigned himself to the

penance, and only hoped it would not be a long one. After the first few lines he was compelled to abandon his bored position, and listened with undisguised interest to the essay, which was by no means of the stereotyped order ridiculed by so many critical writers, but was a simple, earnest address, seemingly coming direct from the author's soul. The false motives of those who fancy they understand the real inwardness of a lofty ambition were laid bare. Scott puts into the mouth of one of his feminine creations these words: "Avarice is ambition's bastard brother, though ambition be sometimes ashamed of the relationship." The fair essayist, to whom the large audience gave such close attention, appeared to take this idea as the keynote of certain of her remarks, showing how many other base and ignoble relatives were allied to ambition. Then she gave a different side to the picture, pointing out the way in which one might aspire to holier objects than those which are thought of by the majority of men,—humanity, its needs, and the pure Model one has to look up to as the source of the highest ambition of all. The applause that followed the speaker's peroration was not a mere empty hand-clapping. Even the most dull auditor seemed to have had a glimpse of the essayist's meaning.

"That was good," whispered Morrison to Clyde, when the applause had ceased and the graduate had taken her seat.

"Yes, very," absently returned the other. "Say, Morrison, have you any idea who that sweet creature

is in white? I have often seen her at church, but don't know her name. There! She is going to give us a selection from Beethoven."

"That? Why, old fellow, don't you know Lucy Rathbone? I must take notes now, with eyes and ears, for her parents' benefit."

It was a pretty fair proof that the commencement exercises at Miss Worthington's "seminary" were unusually good, that two young men, prejudiced beforehand in regard to the affair, should have concluded to remain, and that in the uncomfortable position of standing without anything to lean against through the entire programme. Desmond's artistic faculty had been aroused by the different types of beauty he found among the graduates. Morrison was interested in the essays, every one of which gave evidence that the author was possessed of not merely a brilliant faculty of composing sentences to please the ear, but that the thoughts expressed were her own and must have come from a thinking mind, a feeling soul. To show how this came about—this difference from an ordinary finishing school for young ladies—one must know something of the character of its founder.

Miss Worthington was a most enlightened woman, a thorough Christian in word and deed, and considered the guardianship of the forty lively girls placed in her charge as a sacred trust. She never frowned too sternly upon girlish pranks, thereby urging the perpetrators to deceit and falsehood, as is the manner of many precep-

tors in boarding schools. She reasoned with them kindly and in private, a manner of remonstrating which had never yet failed to accomplish its object, and besides saved the victim a public disgrace. There is no more pernicious place in existence, perhaps, than a boarding school, for girls whose minds are weak and whose ideas of right and wrong are easily bewildered. One girl with loose ideas of morality can do more harm in a day than ten good girls can reform in a week. Miss Worthington was well aware of this, but while keeping up the closest surveillance, she never did anything that might be regarded as underhanded or mean, and the girls thoroughly understood her kind thought for their welfare. There was nothing in the least repellent about her methods. She herself possessed a profound depth of humor, and believed merriment in the young heart to be a gift of nature to be guided, and not, as a sterner teacher would have preached, to be crushed as a thing of little value. The girls, to the fortieth, adored her, and drank in her teachings with even more avidity than they imagined.

A good teacher in one's youth has more to do than one fancies with the success of his after life. Miss Worthington's pupils had a worthy model ever before them,—their principal's ideal Christian life.

CHAPTER III.

A GREAT CHANGE.

Then wisely weigh
Our sorrow with our comfort.—SHAKESPEARE.

“WHEN shall we three meet again, in lightning, thunder, or in rain?” So quoted, in a chanting tone, Laura Macy. Then she added: “I hope not the last; else I’d be a sorry sight. Nothing puts my wretched hair out of curl like rain or fog.”

“I don’t see how you ever manage to wear bangs in town,” observed one of her companions. “Or live there, either.”

“I don’t—when I can help it,” returned Laura. “‘Crag’s’ is good enough for me. Remember, girls, I expect both of you to put in an appearance at my palatial country home, this summer.”

Commencement was over. Those of the girls who had friends and relatives to greet hastened to do so, and to give them more substantial refreshment in the way of an appetizing lunch. It was always Miss Worthington’s custom to end up the yearly exercises in this pleasing manner. A fit of that unpleasant shyness had come over Dick Morrison when the opportunity occurred for him to renew acquaintance with Miss Rathbone. Therefore,

after a few words with his cousin, Miss Worthington, he drew the unwilling Clyde away trainward.

Certain of the forty inmates of the seminary, who had such important details to look after as packing and cleaning up their rooms, shirked lunch and adjourned to the dormitories. Among them were Laura Macy, Lucy Rathbone, and Nan Dallas—the object of their withdrawal being a farewell chat. These three girls were inseparables: Their comrades dubbed them “The Sandwich.” Laura and Nan standing for the bread, Lucy for the delicate slice of ham—no one knows why, save the inveterate propensity of schoolgirls to bestow nicknames.

Laura was a Beauty, like Tommy Traddles’ sister-in-law—spelled with a big B; tall, fair, and dignified. Lucy was a petite, hazel-eyed creature, and a merry little elf, full of harmless mischief. Nan was taller than Laura, slender enough to be termed thin, and dark as a gypsy. Her mates sometimes styled her a saint, sometimes a darling, just as the mood happened to strike them. Another tie than that of a mere school friendship had lately bound the trio in closer bonds. The previous Sunday they, with about half of their companions, had made a public confession of faith, being baptized at the little country church where the school attended in a body every week. Miss Worthington, who had labored for this result with prayer and earnest counsels, had felt greatly encouraged, and was stimulated, as all are, by such fruitage.

It may seem somewhat curious that three girls, of the

ages of nineteen or thereabouts, should have lived to such an age, within continual reach of Christian instruction, without heretofore having thought at all seriously about these matters. But Laura, who was an orphan, had always lived at boarding schools, where religion, given in a perfunctory way, for the most part, displayed its least inviting aspect. Only the previous year, her guardian had sent her to be "finished" at Miss Worthington's, before taking her proper place in society as a "bud," and with her manifold attractions of beauty, culture, and wealth, necessarily a belle.

Lucy had always been an attendant at Sunday-school and church; but it seemed to her that until coming to this school she had only been taught the morality of religion; never its beauty and necessity. Nan was a home missionary's daughter, full of liveliness and fun, but who having seen much hardship during her short life, thoroughly understood the meaning of poverty and self-denial. A wealthy aunt had given her this opportunity for self-advancement and education; and as Nan expected to earn her living by teaching—should it ever happen that she should be thrown defenseless on the world—the chance was eagerly seized upon. Mr. Dallas was not one who believed in forcing youthful inclinations, nor in bringing unwilling converts to the throne of heaven. In all his children he implanted a love of truth, a high sense of honor, and left the rest to God. In a passive manner Nan had absorbed her father's sermons; but they had passed by, making little impression upon her mind,

and not reaching her heart at all. Even Miss Worthington's words aroused in her no desire to become a follower of Christ. All at once, during a revival at the country church, she, with many others of her companions, was brought to feel the need of a personal religion—heart, mind, and spirit drinking in the beautiful truths.

In many cases, converts brought to God during revivals prove but fitful Christians. The excitement over, oftentimes they relapse into their old petty frailties and sins—faults too deep, they fancy, but possibly too dear to their owners, to be eradicated even by the grace and life of Christ. It was as yet too early for Miss Worthington to note the change in those of her charges who had come forward in the new character of Christian soldiers. A pity was that it was so near the close of the school term. If with her wise and strengthening counsellings holding them to the right course any could be tempted to fall backward, how much harder would it be for those receiving little or no help at home.

Of our three friends, Laura Macy might be expected to be subjected to the greatest trials. As she spoke the gay words recorded at the beginning of this chapter, tears bedimmed her beautiful eyes.

“You *must* come, girls,” she repeated. “How am I ever to get along without you?”

Nan lovingly put her arm around her neck.

“My dear girl,” she said, “we’re all in the same boat, you know. I am sure I don’t know what Lucy and I are to do without you. Think of me, ’way up in my eyrie.

Uncle Sam is sorry comfort when we think of the jolly chats we might be having."

Then broke in the merry voice of Lucy Rathbone.

"This isn't a funeral, is it, girls? And are any of us going away to be dead and buried at once? Don't we all reside within the precincts of one single, solitary State? Have steamboats and railroads been abolished?"

The others could not help laughing at her nonsense. Besides, such philosophy was too apparent to be easily swept aside. Women's conversation always leaps "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," with the ease of practiced hands at the art. Laura's tears vanished at once.

"Wasn't that a handsome young man who came in while Laura was reading her essay?" said Nan.

"Which?" asked Lucy, a roguish smile dimpling the corners of her rosebud mouth.

"Both."

"Contrary to all rules of grammar and construction of sentences," exclaimed Laura. "I think the black-eyed one, with the fair complexion, had the finer expression."

"Do you?" asked Lucy. "Well, what will you give me if I promise you an introduction inside of a week?"

Both girls pounced upon her at once, calling her a base deceiver. When she considered them sufficiently teased, Lucy explained herself.

"The one you liked, Laura, was Dick Morrison."

"Your clerical friend?"

“Yes—or, rather, he wasn’t clerical when I knew him. He has been East a number of years, but I recognized him at once. He is going to be assistant pastor at our church now.”

“Then I know what I am going to do,” said Laura. “I love young ministers—they are always so full of zeal. So I am coming to your church.”

“How lovely!”

“You know I never cared much for the church Mr. Murdock attends, and poor papa seldom went to church at all. I’ll join yours.”

“I wish I could too,” observed Nan. “But my work lies elsewhere. There are lots of things I must do at Fern Ridge. Papa counts upon my co-operation in everything.”

“I envy you, Nan,” said Laura. “Your work cut out for you, and no puzzling questions about society and anything else to come between your duty and your inclinations.”

“But just think of the good you can do, Laura; what a power your money will be; what loads of misery you can relieve.”

“That’s just what I dread. A poor girl has less temptation.”

“Perhaps so,” returned Nan. “Some say otherwise. For my part, I would think that the blessings wealth may confer upon others would counteract in every way its temptations. I don’t know, of course, because we have always been poor.”

“Not so poor as I am to-day,” replied Laura. “To me, a mother and father would compensate for any lack of money.”

Nan pressed her hand, and Lucy gave her a sympathizing kiss. Neither would have exchanged her happy home for all the other's beauty and wealth.

CHAPTER IV.

LAURA'S FORTUNE.

We are wrong always when we think too much
Of what we think or are : albeit our thoughts
Be verily bitter as self-sacrifice,
We're no less selfish.—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

NAN returned to her home in the Sierras, Lucy and Laura to the city. At the train Lucy was met by her father, and Laura entering the carriage awaiting her was driven to her guardian's home. Mr. Murdock was the lawyer who had taken charge of her fortune ever since her father's death. He was a rather crusty old bachelor and was himself looked after by a venerable housekeeper in an even more venerable house. Upon Laura's arrival, Mrs. Brown received her and persuaded her to drink a cup of tea while awaiting Mr. Murdock's return from his office.

"Have you any idea why Mr. Murdock desired me to come to him, instead of going at once to 'Crag's'?" asked Laura.

"He didn't say anything to me," answered Mrs. Brown. "'Crag's' is all ready for you, though. I was there myself last week to see that everything was aired."

"That was kind of you, Mrs. Brown. I suppose

Jennie is rather too young to take care of such an immense place."

"Yes, ma'am, that's what I told Mr. Murdock; but he said as Jennie married Ned and Ned was the gardener, she might as well be housekeeper too; so he sent away Mrs. Lewis, though I must say he got her another place even better, if that could be; and now Jennie does her best, of course, seeing she's so young——"

Mrs. Brown's garrulity might have been still going on had not her employer entered and checked the stream of eloquence at its fullest flow. He was glad, if not demonstratively so, to see his young ward.

"You were prompt, Laura," he observed. "That is not a quality usually observable in young women."

"You wished me to be here to-day, and I came," answered Laura. "There was nothing unusual in that. I believe you had something to communicate."

"Yes, yes, I know," said the lawyer, nervously, rubbing the palms of his hands together. "But there is no hurry. It will keep until after dinner."

Therefore Laura put aside her growing impatience and answered his questions about the school she had just left, her companions and future plans, until six o'clock came and with it dinner. The meal was prolonged. It almost seemed as if Mr. Murdock had some hated task before him, he lingered so long over his dessert. Finally he arose, there being no longer any pretext for delaying the communication Laura was so eagerly looking for and so anxious to receive.

"Come into the library, Laura," he said. Did Laura imagine it, or was there a repressed sob in his voice!

"We won't have the gas yet," said her guardian. "That is, if you don't mind." Laura at once assented, and Mr. Murdock seating himself in his easy-chair, she placed herself upon a stool at his feet.

"Before I say anything else, Laura," he began, "I want to tell you that what I have done has been entirely for your good,—at least, what I believed was for your good. If you are disposed to blame me, think of that. I meant it for the best. If it may seem that what you may learn speedily now should have been told you earlier, remember that it was solicitude for you alone which kept it from you."

Laura bowed her head, wondering, with a sort of faint feeling at her heart, what was coming next.

"You know, my dear, that your mother died at your birth—that was nineteen years ago. Your father died ten years later. He thought the world of you, and though during his last severe illness his sufferings were so painful that death would have been a welcome release, he prayed to live that he might still be with you. You were not even then so young but what you may still remember him." A few tears fell upon the hand Laura held in her own. "He was a good man. If he had sinned in his youth"—Laura gave a slight start—"his whole life atoned for the error. When he was dying he gave me this letter for you, which I promised to give you upon your sixteenth birthday.'

"Sixteenth? I am nineteen, now."

"Yes, my dear, and that is what I must ask you to forgive me. I could not bear to put a shadow upon your life then. It was so bright that I determined so far as that was concerned it should remain so, at least during all your school-days. It should remain so still if it lay with me. But I must fulfill my trust."

"There can be no shadows cast upon my father's memory," Laura said in reply. Then as she noticed the kind, yet sad expression upon her guardian's face, she added: "Do you know the letter's contents?"

He nodded, then turned and left her alone in the room.

Laura did not open the letter at once. She looked at the superscription,

"TO MY DAUGHTER LAURA,"

in her father's well-known handwriting. She had been only ten years of age when he died, a little girl just beginning to take an interest in something besides dolls and toys. In her father's journeys he had always made her his companion, and they had been so happy together. Then had come his terrible illness and subsequent death. She could remember it all so distinctly. In all her knowledge of her father she had never known him guilty of a mean or dishonorable act. She wondered what the letter contained, the letter that was a voice from the dead. Somehow, remembering Mr. Murdock's words,

she hated to open it. He had said "sinned." Sin in connection with Paxton Macy was not in her mind to be thought of for a moment. Sin? Why, that meant lying, stealing, murdering! None of these were possibilities where the name Macy was concerned.

Then she opened the letter.

She sat looking at it for a moment with dimmed, uncertain eyes, and then read :

CRAGS, November, 18—

MY DARLING LAURA: When you read this your father will be but a memory to you. I wish it could be that after you have heard me you will still love and respect the writer. But I cannot hope that.

There are no extenuating circumstances. Laura, your father is a thief. I robbed a man who trusted me as a father would his son. In my young days my principles were never very firm. Temptation came, and I made no effort to resist it.

You know how I came out here in early times. Well, among those I met was a man who had had a singular experience. He had left his family—a wife and son—in New York, worked his way out here, and without a nickel in his pocket had gone to work. Every one of his ventures was crowned with success. When I met him he had amassed a large fortune, and was thinking of returning East to bring out his wife and son. He took quite a fancy to me and invited me to share his lodging. I agreed at once, and he made a confidant of me in regard to all his affairs. When he prepared to take the steamer to New York, he gave me a tin box to hold for him until his return.

“We might be wrecked,” he said. “And in my absence banks may fail; so I have had everything I possess put into securities about which I have no doubt, and you must take care of this for me. I only take enough money with me to defray my expenses both ways.”

See what trust he had in me! At first I had no thought of betraying it, but as time went on and no news came from him, I began to wish the contents of the box were my own. Wishes brought other thoughts. Nobody knew I had it. My friend was a quiet man, had made few acquaintances, and I was the only one with whom he had been in the least intimate. No one but myself knew even the extent of his wealth.

Some months went by. News came of the safe arrival of the steamer from the round trip. I went down and questioned the captain regarding the outbound voyage. Among the news items he gave me was one regarding the death of a passenger at sea when they were nearly in sight of New York. The man was the owner of the tin box that I had.

You easily understand the result. I kept the box and never made the slightest attempt to find its owners. From remarks made by my former room-mate, I knew his family had no idea of his having wealth to bestow. He had meant to surprise them.

Why do I tell you this? Laura, I lay upon you the duty of discovering the man's heirs, if any still live, and making restitution. You have a different nature from mine—where I was weak, you will be strong.

Do this and accept the blessing of

Your repentant father,

PAXTON MACY.

The letter fell from the girl's hands. 'This, then, was what it was to be an heiress! She had always before felt that her wealth was a blessing. It had turned into a curse. She could not weep, her heart felt so stony. She was rent by conflicting emotions. She had always revered her father. And now—what could she do? The door opened and her guardian entered. A sight of his face made her hide her face in her hands. Mr. Murdock put his arm around her and drew her toward him. He was an old man and knew how to soothe a proud nature like Laura's.

"You know now," he said, softly. "And I knew it before he died. God forgave him. Can his daughter do less?"

Laura's tears fell then.

"It isn't the money," she sobbed, "but the trust. And we can't restore those lost years. They may have died in poverty."

Mr. Murdock understood her reference. "They were in their Father's care," he said. "We may be sure of that."

Laura's face cleared.

"We will find them," she said. Then came a blank look. "I don't know their names."

"Well, that ends it, then," returned her guardian. "No need of looking for them at all."

Laura sprang from him indignantly. "Don't try to tempt me," she cried. Then, catching sight of his expression, she flung her arms around his neck.

“Forgive me, Uncle Murdock, but don't tease me about this. It is too serious.

“Very well, my dear. We will wait until to-morrow and then we will make our plans as to how we must go to work. Your father trusted me with the man's name. It was John Walton.”

CHAPTER V.

LUCY'S ASPIRATIONS.

We can finish nothing in this life, but we may make a beginning and bequeath a noble example.—SMILES.

“LUCY thinks of starting in to reform the world.” Mrs. Rathbone made this observation to her husband at the dinner table. He looked surprised, and so did the subject of the remark. Lucy at the moment had a far-away look in her eyes, as if she was thinking of something quite remote from the *consommé* she was discussing. Her mother's remark startled, and in a way embarrassed her. One hates to have personal remarks made about him before others, especially at meal times.

Lucy Rathbone, as we know, had just returned from boarding school, her mind and heart consecrated to God's service, and filled with questions about social reforms, humanity's wrongs, and other agitating subjects of a kindred nature. That very morning she had started in to tell her mother some of the thoughts teeming in her busy brain. Her mother had not known what to make of it all. She herself had been brought up in the old-fashioned way; had gone through her “Ollendorf,” and dutifully waded through “Telemaque”; had practised her scales and learned to execute “Silvery Waves” and “The Maiden's Prayer” on the piano without making

any palpable blunders, and had managed many other such harmless accomplishments. Her ideas, like her religion, she had taken from her teachers, and never thought of looking deeply into anything. Upon leaving school, she went into society for a time, at the age of twenty marrying Mr. Rathbone. Her twenty years of married life had not widened her mind to any great extent. The few societies, clerical and otherwise, she had felt it incumbent upon her to join, called more for good sewing qualities than any others. In these she was, as in all household matters, an adept.

Mr. Rathbone was different. He was interested in the class of subjects that engrossed his daughter's mind, but being at present very busy in making money, he could not devote much thought to them. From Saturday noon—he was a banker—until Monday morning he let his mind run on other matters, but at other times he was engrossed in business cares. He was one of the pillars of the First Church, therefore on Sundays he conscientiously strove to refrain from thoughts of dollars and dollar-making.

The Rathbones had two children besides Lucy, lads of ten and fourteen years, Lawrence and Charlie, who were the plagues, and at the same time the pets, of the entire family, as boys usually are. Lucy was the odd one, the nightingale in this commonplace nest of robins, but she would have been unsatisfied did she not look forward to bringing the others up to her altitude.

The Rathbones were all professed Christians. In

making their acquaintance, you may detect a certain variation in their way of carrying out the gospel's dictates.

Lucy's relatives have thus been all introduced to the reader. Her home was the ordinary abode of moderately rich and cultured Californians. Polished floors, warm rugs, and high art tendencies in the decorations, all contributed to the rooms' attractiveness. The family was so accustomed to having everything beautiful and comfortable that it never occurred to any of them that others, perhaps, might lack the same comforts and beauties. Of course, they read about cases of destitution in the daily papers, but they seemed like fairy tales.

"Really, something ought to be done about this," Mr. Rathbone would say.

"And I think the associated charities should do more to relieve distress than they do," his wife would observe.

It never occurred to either of them that they might look into the matter themselves. It was none of their business, which is the world's interpretation of the Golden Rule.

Lucy came home with her mind and heart awake to the fact that misery might be alleviated among suffering humanity, and that she was responsible for a certain amount of this alleviation. "Inasmuch" she and Laura and Nan had taken as their motto, and immediately Lucy prepared to make a confidante of her mother. To her surprise, her mother did not fall in with her plans,

and even made a sarcastic remark to her father with reference to them.

Mrs. Rathbone did not plan to be intentionally unkind. She had been glad when Lucy told her that she was now a Christian, but she could not comprehend why her daughter wanted to go to work so desperately at once, instead of resting awhile, now it was vacation. She had never been so excited over anything, if she remembered rightly. Why should Lucy be so? All these ideas coming so closely upon her had made it necessary, she felt, to speak to Mr. Rathbone. Therefore the words that opened the chapter. They hurt Lucy's feelings; if her father had laughed then, she would have cried. But he did not.

"Come, Lucy," he said, "a nickel for your thoughts. Tell me what great scheme is forming in that brain of yours."

"Not now, papa," she answered. "I'll tell you after a little," again devoting her attention to her neglected soup.

CHAPTER VI.

IDEAS.

Be not simply good; be good for something.—THOREAU.

AFTER dinner they gathered in the library. It was Saturday night, hence Mr. Rathbone could devote himself to his family without confusing thoughts of dollars intruding into his mind.

"This is it, papa," Lucy began. "You see, I was just thinking how much had been given to me and how little to so many others. Here I am, eighteen years old, thoroughly healthy, with plenty of money, a nice home, kind parents, two darling brothers——"

"Thank you, sis," from the boys.

"Lots of time, besides all the pleasure I extract from music and painting. Now, all I do in return for these blessings is just nothing at all."

"You can please your mother and myself by being affectionate and looking as pretty as you know how," said her father, mischievously pinching her cheek.

"Now, don't turn it into a joke," pleaded Lucy. "Nan and I used to talk it over at school. She has a great work to do, you know."

"What is that?"

"Why, the people up where she lives, in the Sierras, are awfully ignorant. Before her father went there,

there were many who had never heard of the Bible even. And all they did was to work, work all the time. Such a groveling life to lead! Mr. Dallas had to begin cautiously for a while—get ideas into their minds one by one, you know. They had no conception of taking things easy or putting any pleasure into their lives. Hope in a happier future they had none. Mr. Dallas began by teaching the children. He knew there was no use in trying to establish a church at once, but he gathered the little ones into his home. He and Mrs. Dallas taught them games at first, after the kindergarten method, then that brought a desire for knowledge. After a while the parents came too, and Mr. Dallas used to talk to them, finally making them feel the need of a personal religion. You have read Walter Besant's 'All Sorts and Conditions of Men,' have you not, papa? Well, it was like that, somewhat. They have a church now. Nan says it is a rough sort of a building, but every board in it is redolent with love to God."

"And what part is your Nan to take in all this reformation?" asked Mr. Rathbone.

"Oh, Nan will do everything. She can teach, and sing, and recite. I don't know, I'm sure, what she can't do. And there is Laura Macy."

"What about her?"

Mrs. Rathbone was interested now. She had heard of the young heiress, not only from Lucy, but from the society papers, which considered Miss Macy an absorbing theme of never-failing interest to their readers.

“Laura and Nan were both baptized when I was, you know, mamma. Laura is her own mistress and will lay out her immense fortune to the best uses. She takes the greatest interest in the working-girl problem, and intends to investigate all its evils and see what she can do to aid in reforming the system.”

“These girls go quite beyond me,” sighed Lucy’s mother. “I thought Miss Macy’s thoughts, now she has graduated from school, would be fixed upon her ‘coming out.’ It was so in my time.”

“Why, mamma, Laura does think of that. Her father always told her he wished her to see the world a little when she became of age. She doesn’t put such things first, that is all.”

“Both Laura and Nan must be perfect prodigies,” observed Mr. Rathbone, smilingly; “and Lucy is a regular heroine worshiper.”

Lucy blushed. “Don’t laugh, please, papa,” she said. “If you knew them, you would call them, as I do, perfect——”

An interruption here occurred, when the servant ushered into the room a young man, who seemingly knew everybody very well, so quickly did he make himself at home. Lucy was especially glad to see him, and the joy appeared to be mutual. Somehow to her his handclasp seemed even more cordial than usual.

“I was so glad to hear from my cousin,” he began, joining at once in the family council.

“Oh! Did Miss Worthington tell you?” interrupted

Lucy. "I am sure, then, you will tell me how to go to work."

"I have plenty for you, in good season," he answered.

The visitor was none other than the Rev. Richard Morrison. The Rathbones had known him as a boy, before he had decided to enter the ministry, and he had then been a frequent visitor to their home. He and Lucy had always been the best of friends. During his absence at college they, of course, had lost sight of him, but since his return to his former home they had renewed the old friendship.

"I came to tell you how Miss Lucy did at the commencement," he said. "But I see I am too late. You wouldn't believe a word of my criticism now, anyhow."

"Aren't you mean?" said Lucy, as she feigned a pout. "I am sure I don't mind what you say."

"Not if I bestow praise?"

"In that case you may consider the meeting adjourned until next time. We'll take your word for it. What I must know is, who was that dear, delightful creature who stood with you during the whole of the exercises?"

"That? Why, it is curious, but I really thought of bringing him here with me this evening. Then I considered it better to wait, and get Mrs. Rathbone's permission."

"Any friend of yours, Dick, would be welcome here," said Mrs. Rathbone, always on hospitality intent.

Lucy was manifestly impatient. Possibly Morrison knew this, and could not resist the wish to tease her by not replying at once to her curiosity.

"What is his name?" she finally queried, growing tired of waiting an answer to her first question.

"Clyde Desmond."

"The artist? I'm so sorry you didn't bring him. They say he is absolutely too good to live—yet so eccentric in his ways. You know how generous he is, establishing that mission school down on the south side——"

Mr. Morrison interrupted her: "Did he really? How dull he must have thought me. Why, don't you know, I was telling him about that mission, and he never said a word."

"Native modesty, of course," exclaimed Lucy.

"By the way," asked the young minister, "what subject was under discussion when I came in? You all appeared totally oblivious to the door bell."

"Let Dick into it," said Charlie, already familiar with the new assistant pastor. "He's up in all that sort of thing."

Mrs. Rathbone considered the slangy phraseology of her sons as deplorable, but nothing that she could do or say seemed to mend it. Mr. Morrison understood boy nature better.

"The boys know me, Mrs. Rathbone," he said, smiling. "Now I want to find out what 'that sort of thing' is."

He was speedily enlightened, and made acquainted with the several merits of Miss Laura Macy and the Dallas family. It pleased him, he knew not why, to know that the fair essayist who had so excited his interest was a comrade of Miss Rathbone. It seemed that he already knew the Dallases by repute.

"I heard a story recently whose hero cannot say enough in praise of Dr. Dallas," he said.

"Who is it? Some one who knows him intimately?" asked Lucy, always enthusiastic upon the subject of Nan's relatives.

"His name is Dale. Clyde Desmond told me about him. Dale considers Dr. Dallas and his wife but a little lower than the angels. To use his own words, they kept him from falling back into perdition."

"I have heard about him," said Mrs. Rathbone. "John Dale, you know, Lucy. The story was so garbled, though, by the reporters, I wish you would give us your account."

"Nan has often spoken of a Mr. Dale, who was her father's right-hand man in all his projects, especially those for the children. Is he the one?"

Mr. Morrison assented.

"He is a noble creature," he said. "Well named John. I fancy the beloved disciple must have had a face like his—strength so subtly blended with sweetness."

"Have you met this Dale?"

"Only for a passing glimpse. It was in the car the other day, which is how Desmond came to tell me about

him. His appearance attracted my attention, and I asked Clyde for his history.”

The clergyman here took an easier position, preparing to relate the life history of the reclaimed. But John Dale deserves a chapter to himself.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EVOLUTION OF A WEED.

No evil dooms us hopelessly except the evil we love, and desire to continue in, and make no effort to escape from.—GEORGE ELIOT.

“IT was this way,” Mr. Morrison began. “That is, if I remember rightly what Desmond told me. You have heard, perhaps, Mrs. Rathbone, of the artistic propensity for tumbling into odd places in search of models. Well, one day Desmond took a notion to explore Chinatown all by himself, to see if he couldn’t rake up some new subject. He fancied his patrons were wearied of his ordinary figure pieces, genre sketches, landscapes, and the like, though very good things they are, by the way.

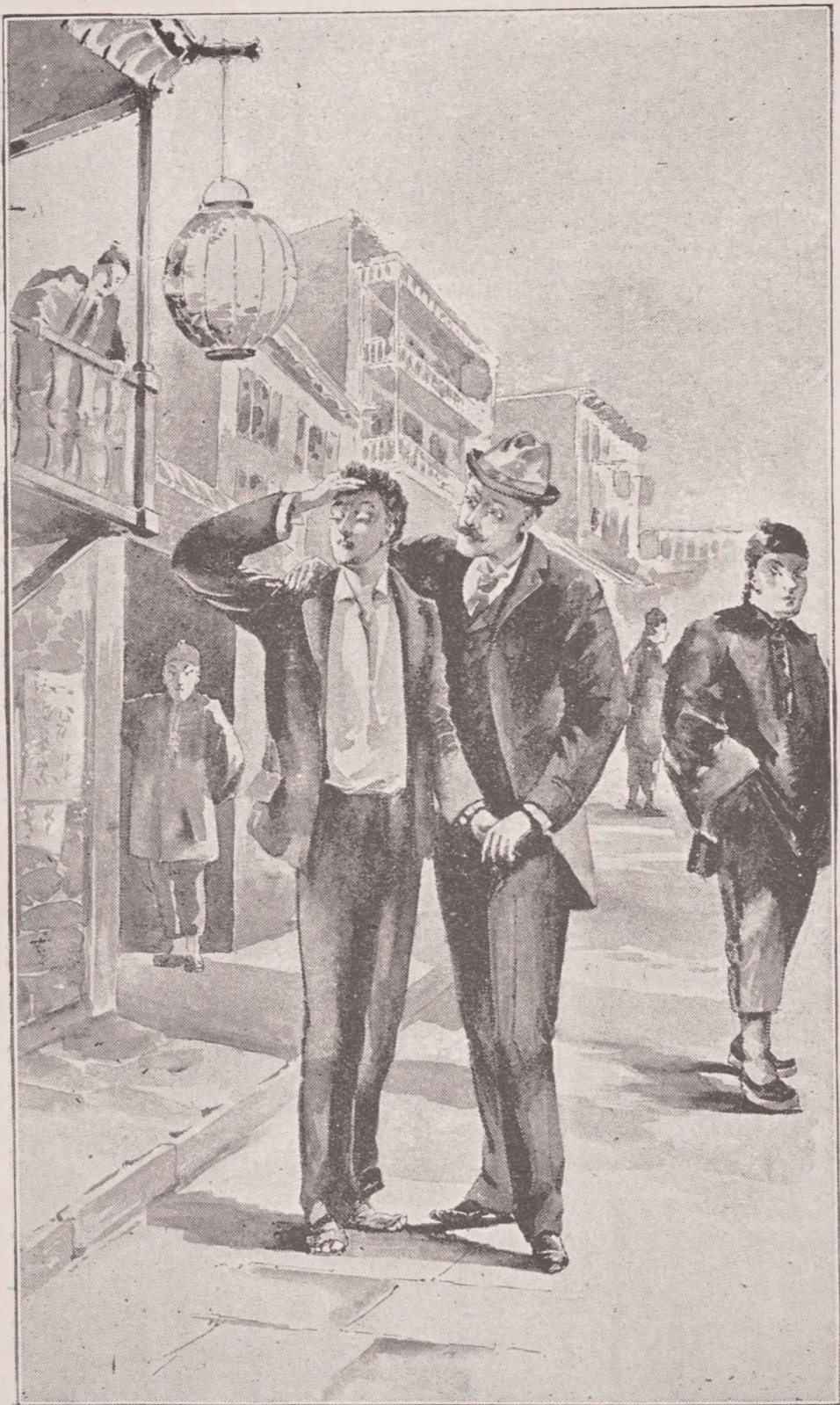
“Up one alley and down another he tramped, but all there was to be seen were shops and Mongolian men and children, pleasing enough subjects, it is true, but which had been about exhausted by Alexander and others. You know the former’s success in depicting that sort of scene, especially.”

“I understand that Joullin has also taken up this line,” interposed Mrs. Rathbone.

“Is that so? Well, I wish him luck, I am sure—better luck than Clyde had in getting odd models. He thought he never was to find one, when all at once he

caught sight of the most villainous old Chinaman you ever saw or dreamed of—a little, wizen-faced creature, with a gray beard straggling from his withered chin. Clyde said he knew the fellow was a veritable Mephistopheles the moment his eyes fell upon him; and he also meant to get a sketch of his phiz without delay. With the known dislike of the Chinese to being photographed, he had to work rapidly. In a jiffy out came his camera from his pocket, and before the creature got away a negative was secured. Of course, one could not judge of its correctness until afterward.

“But this was not enough. The old Mongolian interested Clyde somehow, and he was bound to make his acquaintance. He had stood at the entrance to a most notorious opium joint, which Clyde, upon a moment’s reflection, decided to visit. Have you ever seen one, Mrs. Rathbone? No? Well, you have missed a most interesting, if pathetic and extremely disgusting sight. You can’t go in without a guide, you know; therefore Clyde set about securing one for himself. Not a policeman in sight; so he looked out for some sort of a white man as a guide. Curious, is it not? Most people have an inborn distrust of the heathen Celestial as a guide. An exceedingly youthful object of Desmond’s search stood a few doors away. He was a most pitiable looking object, though Clyde said he did not bestow much thought upon him then. It was afterward that his appearance enlisted his sympathies, and his guidance was solicited and straightway obtained by the usual fee. The



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two descended into the joint. It was a curious experience. Some time I will get my friend, Dr. Hartley, of the Chinese Mission, to go with us upon an excursion through the Chinese quarters. I sha'n't tell you now of Desmond's experience in those truly infernal regions, nor how he prosecuted an acquaintance with the subject of this sketch. You have all seen the latter. It was shown at one of the exhibitions of the Art Association, labeled 'A Mongolian Mephistopheles.' I saw it in New York, in the private art gallery of the dealer who bought it. You remember it, Mrs. Rathbone? I thought so. It was a face one could not easily forget.

"I am a frightful hand at telling a story. Probably getting up sermons spoils any talent I might develop as a story-teller. I wish Desmond was here to relate the tale. Here I have almost lost sight of the subject; yet the story's hero was Desmond's guide. When they emerged from the den,—Clyde said any one having a sense of the distinction between perfume and odor would have done so with alacrity,—when they emerged, I repeat, of course, Clyde handed the fellow his fee. 'Thanks,' he said, and turned to go. In what direction, do you suppose? Right about face into the place they had just come from. As Clyde said, he fancies no one has a better idea than himself of the propriety of attending to one's own affairs to the exclusion of other people's; yet the fellow looked so young and all-around miserable, that he didn't want him to go to ruin if he could help it. So Desmond grasped his arm—such a thin one, he said!

“ ‘See here, young man,’ exclaimed he, ‘where are you going?’

“ ‘To hit the pipe,’ he answered, rather sullenly. ‘What business is it of yours?’

“ ‘Not much, perhaps. But you’re a fellow-countryman, if I don’t miss my mark—a man and a brother. I wouldn’t wish a relative of mine to waste his time and health in such a place. Say, now, my boy, leave such amusements to the heathen, won’t you, and come away?’

“ ‘I can’t,’ he answered. ‘You don’t understand. Once get a taste of the pipe, and you’re done for.’

“ ‘They had quite a talk after that, but he didn’t enter the joint at that time. In fact, he never went there again. You know of my friend,—he is Desmond’s friend also,—Dr. Thorne, and have heard of his hypnotizing experiments? Possibly you have heard—indeed the papers were full of it while I was in New York last summer—of the young man who was cured of the opium habit by a simple method? No, Miss Lucy? Well, here goes, then. You see, he placed the man in a hospital, and every day paid him a visit. When the fellow began to grow restless and to feel the need of the drug, the doctor would put him under the influence of his concentrated mind, and would say: ‘Now, here’s your pipe; have a smoke.’ And pretty soon, after taking lingering puffs at an imaginary pipe, the youth would go off to dream-land, as naturally as you please. Whether his delusions were the same as when puffing the real article, I do not know. The doctor continued his treatment for some

time regularly, in the meantime fortifying his patient with good, wholesome food. Finally he went there less often ; then not at all. For, don't you see?—the man was cured."

Lucy spoke: "Some things done by hypnotists are exceedingly absurd, I think. Fancy making a man imagine himself a bear, and go around on all fours, growling. This occurred at a lecture I attended last month."

"Yes, such illustrations are not only foolish, but wrong. They are said to impair the entire nervous system of the person who submits."

Mrs. Rathbone here put in a word.

"These silly experiments have no more to do, Lucy, with the real significance of hypnotism than the dancing of a pith doll charged with electricity is related to the great system itself."

"Say, Mr. Morrison," interrupted Charlie,—he hated anything like arguments and discussions, could see no use in them, in fact, except to take up valuable time,—“what had that man to do with your opium fellow, I want to know?”

"Don't you see the connection? The man was John Dale. Three years ago it happened, and he has never touched the drug since. With God's help, he never will."

"Where does the Dallas family's help come in?" asked Mrs. Rathbone.

"Once, and once only, was Dale tempted to return to the old life. Their aid in this trying juncture, joined to

their heartfelt prayers, kept him back. Don't you think, my friends, that Dale is rather a hero, a whole novel in himself?"

"Yes, indeed," assented Lucy. "It doesn't seem possible that such a story could have lived itself right in this city. But your Mr. Desmond is a bigger hero than John Dale, in my eyes."

"Well, you shall meet the hero at the first opportunity."

"How was it that this Dale contracted the habit of taking opium? And how was it there was no one but the artist to take an interest in his welfare?"

Mr. Rathbone had not been so interested in anything outside of business for years as he was in the tale the clergyman had related.

"Well, that is another story. What do you say, Mr. Rathbone? Shall the meeting adjourn now? It is getting late."

CHAPTER VIII.

CLYDE DESMOND.

Can a man help imitating that with which he holds reverential converse?—PLATO.

A MAN with a personal experience such as that Mr. Morrison related of Clyde Desmond is apt to have something in him. The fact is, Clyde was somewhat of a character, a combination of noble and occasionally erratic tendencies. Tolstoi's milder theories found in him a ready and able exponent. Loving his fellow-creatures he had a great amount of faith in them, and though not blessed with an overplus of this world's goods, was always seeking ways to benefit them. As we know, he was an artist, the aspect of life he loved best to give expression to in his pictures being the shadows, the darker phases of city life. That is, he loved to explore those portions of the town usually relegated to the lower classes, and from the denizens of that region he would take his models. Though he never gave voice to such a sentiment, and his companions would have laughed to scorn the idea of Desmond being a reformer, there is little doubt that his designs were to draw in a forcible manner the attention of the rich to the needs of the poor. His ragamuffin pictures were extremely popular, and he sold sufficient of these and of others to

make a comfortable living. At thirty, he was still a bachelor. "This hand-to-mouth way of living is good enough for me," he would remark to those who questioned him as to why he preferred a single life. "But as for condemning some tenderly nurtured girl to share it, my dear fellow, it wouldn't do in the least."

There was a mission school in the southern portion of the city that mainly owed its being to Clyde Desmond's exertions in its behalf. It struck Mr. Morrison that here was a good field for Lucy to begin the work she contemplated. A few nights after this thought occurred, he called at the Rathbone mansion, this time accompanied by Clyde, who was in no wise reluctant to meet the pretty girl whose face had captivated his fancy at the commencement exercises at Miss Worthington's.

The family was at home, gathered in the library, where a bright fire gave smiling contrast to the gloom without. Even in summer, in this part of the world, one builds a fire to keep away the evening fog.

"My friend, Desmond," was introduced, and readily made himself at home. He had such a genial, pleasant way about him that no one could help thawing at once. Even Mr. Rathbone, who, as a rule, considered that penniless people, especially young men without assured incomes, had no right to encumber the earth, could not look askance at the artist, who made him interested in spite of himself with his breezy, timely observations. Morrison was pleased to find his friend welcomed into the home circle so cordially. He liked to see everybody

happy about him. That is why he had chosen the branch of clerical work which would bring him into close contact with the poor. He wished to bring the tidings of joy into godless, and consequently unhappy, homes.

During their converse, the subject of mission schools was broached, Lucy gaining her mother's permission to pay a visit on the following Sunday to the special one in which their friend was interested.

"Dr. Thorne doesn't believe in mission schools," said Clyde, in answer to a question from Mr. Rathbone, "or in kindergartens. Yet there lives no more humane man than he, I verily believe."

"Why not?" was the surprised retort.

"He thinks it would be a better idea to discover some plan to exterminate evil-doers, render them harmless. He holds that to make them better is impossible. 'Once a fiend, always a fiend,' he says, 'and to perpetuate a race of fiends is a crime.' You see, being a physician, he believes implicitly in the hereditary theory. Like Besant's 'Demoniac,' he thinks it useless to try to fight against an hereditary trait."

"Then he would have us fold our hands and accept the inevitable?"

"Not exactly; but he considers that the work done in trying to rescue others from evil benefits the benefactor, not the recipient."

"And he doesn't believe in General Booth's noble plan developed in 'In Darkest England?'" This from Lucy, the enthusiast

"I fancy he has not given the affair much thought."

"And yet," observed Mrs. Rathbone, "Is not Dr. Thorne the man who cured John Dale, taking such pains over a youth who was an utter stranger to him?"

"That was different," returned Clyde. "It was in the interests of science. Besides, he knew that in Dale the opium habit was not hereditary."

"That reminds me," said Lucy. "Mr. Morrison, you didn't tell us how John Dale contracted the habit."

"Desmond knows better than I. Let him take the floor."

"It is a pretty long story," began the artist. "Dale's father died when he was a child—was drowned, I believe, or died at sea, while returning from a voyage. His mother was an easy-going woman, and let John do pretty much as he pleased. She married again, and that made matters worse. The stepfather couldn't manage John, and John wouldn't be managed. When he was about eighteen he ran away, and finally drifted out here. He knocked about from one employment to another, was never very successful in anything, probably because he had no definite aim in life. Insufficient clothing and lack of proper care while ill with a cold developed a severe lung trouble. His landlady, thinking he would die on her hands, and she be compelled to bury him, or at any rate cause herself unnecessary trouble, perhaps, sent him to a hospital. To ease his pain, morphine was prescribed. Of course he got it then in small doses, but after his lungs grew stronger and he was sent away,

he found that the morphine taste had not been eradicated from his system. He secured work again, but all his wages went for the drug. From that, in his friendless condition, to the pipe was but a step. With the pipe came degradation. He could not work, so he used to beg or borrow the money to gratify his opium habit. No, he did not steal, he said, his sense of honor not being quite dead. He gambled occasionally, chiefly with his Chinese companions. Then he used to aid them in their lottery schemes. Several times the police ran him in and took him before the court, but nothing was ever proved against him. Oh, yes, he was as low down as one could possibly be."

"Which only proves," observed the clergyman, in a thoughtful tone, "to what heights the lowest can rise when supported by a Father's strong arm."

"Did he ever hear from his parents?" asked Lucy.

"Not a word. Of course they never knew where to write. He made inquiries, but the whole family had disappeared. He had a little brother of whom he was very fond--his stepfather's son. He believes they must all be dead."

Lucy was in a questioning mood to-night. The subject of John Dale exhausted, she projected another.

"Is Dr. Thorne a Christian?" she asked of Morrison.

"No, I don't think he is. As far as I know, he has never entered a church in his life. His father and mother were both avowed agnostics. To tell the truth,

I never asked Thorne outright. He evades all religious subjects."

"He certainly carries out the gospel's precepts," said Clyde. "His humanity is something inspiring to one who has the good fortune of being his friend."

"I wish you would bring him in to see us, sometime, will you not?" remarked Mrs. Rathbone.

Both young men laughed. To them the idea even seemed ludicrous.

"Easier said than done," said Clyde. "In the first place, Thorne's profession precludes him from mingling much with any outside his clientele. Secondly, he hates society, that is, what we call society. Books are his solace. It would make him change certain of his theories could he but mingle with our part of the world a bit."

"How Nan would love to see him," exclaimed Lucy. "She adores heroes, and I think your doctor is a true hero." Mr. Morrison smiled, remembering what Lucy had said upon this subject the other evening.

CHAPTER IX.

TEACHING A CLASS.

There is not the least difficulty in doing a thing if you only know how to do it; the trouble is to explain your method.—RUDYARD KIPLING.

“THERE is one thing I would like to abolish,” said Lucy to Clyde the following Sunday. They had been to church and Sunday-school, and were now wending their way toward Clyde’s protégé.

“What is that?” asked the young man. He already knew his companion well enough to surmise the worth of all her reformatory ideas.

“It is these long opening and closing exercises,” she answered. “If I had a school of my own, I would never allow any of those interminable introductory remarks and summings-up afterward. I would have singing, though, not the few hymns they give us at our school, but lots of it, and short, earnest prayers. Then, when the teachers had finished their talks with their respective classes, I’d have one hearty hymn of praise before the benediction. I don’t wonder the children get restless at having to listen to so many *remarks*, sermons rather, not only dull, but far above the hearers’ heads.”

Clyde laughed at Lucy’s excitement. “Well, wait

until you become a part of our mission school. There is plenty of need of reform there. Not in that direction, though," he added.

Their short walk ended at the corner of two streets, neither of them pleasing to a fastidious eye. A saloon was the chief feature in the view. In the same building as this home of vice was the hall where Clyde had established his mission. Formerly the quarters of an athletic club, there were still occasional signs to be seen of the latter's occupancy. The hall was not scrupulously clean as to walls and ceilings, and was entirely bare of adornment in the way of pictures and mottoes. It was carpetless, the only furniture consisting of plain wooden chairs and settees, and a small organ. All nations seemed to be congregated in the room, for Clyde never inquired into the nationality of those invited to attend; every one was welcomed. A few children whose parents were alive to the peculiar benefits bestowed by the mission's benefactor at the Christmas season, and allowed their little ones to mingle with the "heretics" for a time, were not at all backward at putting in an appearance every Sunday, even scrambling for the best seats. Germany and Ireland were largest represented in the school, with one or two delegates from Italy and Spain. A little colored boy sat side by side with an unmistakable Hebrew. The children represented various stages of prosperity, as well as all phases of nationality.

"Some in rags, some in tags, and some in velvet gowns," whispered Lucy, an interested spectator of

these various specimens of humanity, to Clyde. "Where did you get them all?"

"Went after some," he answered. "Others came by themselves. A motley crowd, aren't they?"

They were indeed, and an unruly crowd, as well. It was hard to preserve order, when so many of the children had no idea what the word meant. When the school first started, a policeman had to be called in to preserve the peace. Certain big boys of the hoodlum variety joined just for the sake of making a disturbance. When these had been weeded out, no further trouble ensued, and the guardian of the peace was permitted to take his services elsewhere. Of course, the school was by no means the perfectly disciplined one we find as an adjunct to a church. This could not be expected where the little ones came from miserable homes, many having no homes at all. They were pretty good, though, except for that love of "making a racket," which seems to lie dormant in most children's hearts.

Clyde loved them, and was satisfied if they attended the sessions regularly. He knew them all by name, and always shook hands and asked after each child's welfare every Sunday. As for the children, they thought Mr. Desmond the sum of all the perfections. He was also a great favorite with the teachers. Of these there weren't many, not so many as there ought to have been. A goodly number had come down from the home school to help when the venture was started, but after a few weeks their interest died out, and they came no more. That

is usually the case when people take up anything just for a fad. The novelty over, they drop it at once. Clyde hoped Lucy would not be of this class. A few brave spirits had stayed by the school, and felt fully repaid when their efforts brought one and then another new pupil each week to join the school. Prizes were given to stimulate interest. Clyde believed in prizes.

“These little fellows are too young to consider the proposition that virtue is its own reward. I’m going to help ’em along a little,” he said, when conservative people remonstrated with him for this lavishness.

He gave Lucy as a class, after the short opening exercises, two little lads, both rather ragged and not remarkably clean. I am ashamed to confess, but Lucy shuddered in the depths of her soul. You must remember that she was fresh from boarding school, where clean finger tips were the rule, and a daily bath a mere matter-of-course. Clyde was so used to this style of urchin that he noticed nothing unusual in their attire.

“They can’t read very well,” he said, “but you can talk to them. I don’t believe you can give them the ‘Internationals’ at once. We don’t as a rule here, you know, until they get advanced somewhat.”

Lucy was dismayed. The little girls she had hitherto taught in other classes had been nearly as familiar with the Bible as she was herself. Her teachings had chiefly consisted in asking the questions in the quarterly, and receiving their answers. What was she to do? She decided to find out her new charges’ names first.

"What is your name, dear?"

"'Taint dear. Jimmie McCloud."

"And yours?"

"Teddy."

"Teddy what?"

"Never you mind. I ain't goin' ter give it away till I finds out what yer a drivin' at."

Lucy wished to laugh, but knew she must not. Then a great horror came over her at the dirt pressing so near her dainty garments. "They must be washed," she thought. "I wonder how I can broach the subject to them?" Her thoughts finally voiced themselves. In coaxing tones, she pressed the subject upon them, the importance of cleanliness in hands and faces.

"Never mind your clothes," she said. "Ragged clothes don't matter in the least. But water is cheap, and may be had for the use. And boys, won't you try it on your faces and hands?"

Jimmie had met this sort of proposition before. He was a public school boy, and knew how to meet every argument in favor of cleanliness with one equally forcible in favor of dirt. A promised bribe from Lucy lured from him the statement, "Next Sunday I'll wash 'em, ter please you."

Teddy would not promise, so Lucy did not urge him. After her little lecture, she told them a Bible story. School over, Jimmie alone promised to come again the next Sunday. Teddy had flown away, she knew not where.

"Well?" questioned Clyde, as they wended their steps homeward.

"Not well," answered Lucy. "I fear I was never cut out for a teacher."

"Why not?"

"I made such a dismal failure to-day. Talking to those boys about keeping their faces clean, and never mentioning their souls."

"'Cleanliness is next to godliness.'"

"I'm beginning to believe that a mistaken notion. Primitive nature doesn't bathe from choice, does it? Those boys are surely primitive."

"Perhaps. Anyhow, next Sunday, now you have a hold on their hearts, you can reach them more easily the next time."

"If there *is* a next time," said his companion, with a sigh.

CHAPTER X.

A PRIMITIVE SPECIMEN.

Kindness—a language which the dumb can speak, and the deaf can understand.—BOVEE.

THERE was not a next time for Teddy. That is, not exactly that kind of a next time. Perhaps you would like to have a pen portrait of 'Teddy'? He was very small, very thin, and not very clean. In fact, some people might have called him very dirty indeed, especially his face. He had all the antipathy of the ordinary street gamin to soap and water, with a little thrown in on his own account. But he had two bright eyes, in which the tears were shining now, and a dear little mouth, drooping at the corners. For Teddy was hungry. There is no doubt about it; for he had had nothing but a cracker to eat all day; and a cracker is not so very "filling"! At any rate it is calculated to fill only a very small spot, and small as Teddy was he was too big to be filled by a cracker.

Teddy was only ten years old; but for all that he was his own master. His father died first. That was when they lived in the East, and Teddy was "nothin' but a kid," as the lad would have phrased it. Then his mother started out to find Jack. Jack was Teddy's big brother, a good many years older than himself. He had never

amounted to much, Teddy had been told, and at last he had taken himself out of the way. "Gone to California," folks said. Everybody went to California in those days; running away to sea had gone out of fashion. That is why Teddy's mother, therefore, had come to California.

But she did not find Jack. In the first place, she did not know exactly how and where to search for him; in the second place, her money gave out. She fell ill and died, and Teddy was left alone—a little fellow only seven years old.

He was ten now, and his last three years had been spent in picking up a living somehow or other. Sometimes he sold papers; occasionally he ran errands; in the strawberry and orange seasons he rode on a peddler's cart, and rang the door bells of houses, showing the people who answered his ring astonishingly enormous samples of his wares. To-day, somehow or other, the living wouldn't be picked up, and Teddy had to go hungry.

Across the street stood Clyde's mission. Teddy saw the boys going up the stairs. He knew some of them, in fact he had ventured in himself last Sunday; but he did not care to go any more. His teacher had told him she would give him a pretty card if he would come on the following Sunday, that is, to-day, with clean face and hands. Now if there was any one thing Teddy supremely hated, as we have already more than hinted, it was clean hands and face. "Dudefied!" he called such a condition. In the street boy's unwritten law, to be a "dude" was a crime.

To be sure, the pretty young lady had said she would give him a card, but Teddy was too smart for her. He had seen those cards, and he knew that little verses were printed on them, which one had to learn. Oh, yes! he was too cute for that. If she had promised a top, or marbles, now—but a card! Well, Teddy stayed on the other side of the street. Then Jimmie McCloud came along. I am sorry to have to record it, but Teddy made a face at him. “Hi, Jimmie!” he shouted, “where did yer get that hat?”

Jimmie did look rather stylish—“giddy,” he called it himself. His face was clean, his hands fairly so; cuffs and a turned-down collar of black and white calico were further ornamented by a large red necktie. His clothes were the same ones of the previous Sunday, but his chief glory was his hat—quite a smart new Derby. He hardly disdained to cast a glance at the plebeian Teddy; but he said, condescendingly:

“What’s the matter with yer comin’ over, yer-self?”

“Not any for me, thanks,” retorted Teddy. Then, as he caught sight of Lucy and Clyde in the distance, he took to his heels, and was soon lost to view.

When Lucy came up, she asked: “Wasn’t that Teddy I saw speaking with you just now, Jimmie?”

“Yes’m. But he ain’t comin’ no more.”

“Why not?”

“Well, he says he don’t take no pleasure in bein’ clean.” And Jimmie slightly emphasized the second

“he,” as he cast a downward look upon his own spotless attire.

“I’m so sorry,” said Lucy. “Can you tell me where he lives?”

“Oh, yes’m. He boards at Jerry O’Brien’s aunt’s house. That is, when he’s flush. When he ain’t got no money, nobody knows where he keeps himself.”

“Has he no parents?”

“No’m. They’re dead. Teddy don’t have to knuckle to no one. He’s his own boss.” A slightly regretful shade might have been detected in Jimmie’s tones. Assuredly he was not his own boss. And that condition of things seemed very delightful to Jimmie, as indeed it does to most of us.

“Well, give me the address of that house you mentioned. I will go and see him to-morrow.”

Teddy in the meanwhile was running for dear life. It seemed as if he couldn’t put sufficient distance between himself and that Sunday-school. In his flight he did not look to right or left. All at once, he ran plump into a solitary pedestrian, the concussion being so great that the lad was thrown backward, striking his head against the stone sidewalk. He lay there quite still. The unintentional cause of his fall stooped and picked him up; but Teddy fell back again, a limp mass of skin and bone.

“Poor boy!” said the man. Then he gathered Teddy in his arms, and walking on for a block or so, he soon reached a house, whose general appearance betokened a physician’s residence. He carried his burden up

the stairs, and opening the door with his pass-key, entered. Teddy was taken into a bedroom and placed upon the bed. Not until his head had been bathed for some minutes with alternate applications of hot and cold water, did he open his eyes. Then, how he stared, to see the strange room and the stranger's face bending over him.

"What yer doin'?" he finally asked.

"Bathing your head," answered the other.

"What for?"

"Because it was the only way in which I could bring you to your senses."

"Jingo! What's the matter?"

Then recollection came back to Teddy, and he burst out laughing.

"I almost knocked you down, didn't I?" he said. Then he went on, and explained to the other the reason of his rapid transit over the sidewalk, and various other things in his history. He soon fell back on the pillows, quite exhausted.

The stranger left him a few minutes, soon returning with a nice little lunch laid out upon a tray. Teddy's eyes danced.

"How'd yer know I was hungry?" he asked. "Ain't had nothin' but a cracker to eat all day!"

You may be sure he left nothing upon any of the plates. When he had finished, he began questioning the other.

"What's yer name?"

"Doctor Thorne."

“Not the feller at the hospital?”

“The very same.”

“You’re great, you are. We used to call it out, yer know: ‘Extra! All about the Opium Fiend!’ Yes, I know yer.”

He raised himself on the pillow, and held out his hand.

“Proud to know yer, sir,” he said.

“The same to you, my boy.”

Then Teddy, a sweetly satisfied smile upon his face, fell asleep. It had been long since he had been in a bed like that, and his tired little form made the most of it.

CHAPTER XI.

LAURA MACY.

“Soldiers, I have often heard that the best man is he who can tell himself what is the right thing; that next comes he who listens to good advice; and that he who cannot advise himself nor submit to another, has the meanest capacity of all.”—MINUCIUS TO HIS TROOPS (LIVY).

THE detective's search did not result in finding anybody upon whom Laura might bestow those ill-gotten gains. There was no end to the “John Waltons” unearthed, with their descendants unto the third and in one instance the fourth generation. Not one was the John Walton who had involuntarily made Paxton Macy his heir. They began to fancy the whole thing a sick man's chimera. Laura finally decided to take her guardian's advice, let well enough alone and enjoy her wealth until the time came to give it up. After a deliciously lazy summer at “Craggs,” she came up to town and hunted up her friends. Lucy's earnest manner of going to work took Laura's fancy at once. The latter fulfilled her intention of joining the First Church, thereby making a marked increase in the attendance of young men at that sanctuary. All the world dearly loves an heiress. When she is a beauty as well, that adds a deal to the admiration.

Laura thoroughly intended to follow out those high ideals she had formed while under Miss Worthington's influence, and to keep herself unspotted from the world. Her father's wishes had been that she assume a place in society consistent with her wealth, and her aunt, Mrs. Van Bergh, a leader of the local aristocracy, was always urging her to carry out those desires. Just at present Laura's inclinations did not lead her in that direction. She was much interested in Mr. Morrison's "slumming"¹ work, and aided him in every way as far as her money and personal services could do so. As Laura was practically her own mistress, and not particularly controlled by any one except her aunt, she could be, and was, a genuine help to the young pastor. They could not reach everybody—the Salvation army seems to be the only agency that can go to the heart of the matter, in connection with these sinful ones in the slums. Even if people accustomed to more decorous and precise methods cannot quite approve of the loud methods of General Booth's followers, there is no real question about their accomplishing an untold amount of good in their way.

Society smiled when it heard of the "fad" of the heiress, but Laura did not mind the sneers of those for whose good opinion she cared very little. It was a bit of gossip overheard at a church social that spoilt it all,

¹This word has become somewhat familiar since the "College Settlement" movement. For the information of those not familiar with it we may say that it simply means working to benefit the inhabitants of the slums or low districts of a great city.

and nearly had the effect of hardening Laura's heart forever. It happened on this wise. Laura had been working busily for the success of the affair, and feeling rather tired after her efforts, withdrew into a quiet recess to rest for a brief space before helping with the refreshments. Two ladies, Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Rathbone, were conversing a short distance from the cosy corner in which Laura had taken refuge, in tones which they evidently thought were inaudible, but which were far from that to one near by. Possibly they would have moderated their voices had they known the subject of their remarks was in such easy hearing distance. Laura could not move without their seeing her, which would have covered them both with embarrassment. After the first few words, a feminine curiosity held her to the spot.

"Yes," observed Mrs. Rathbone. "It would be a splendid thing for him."

"Even ministers can't help liking money," added Mrs. Lewis. "And I always thought her religious zeal was owing to something more than a mere love of the thing itself."

"I am sure you wrong her a little there. Lucy is quite as crazy over this mission work as is Miss Macy, and you surely couldn't fancy for a moment that she is in love with Dick Morrison or the artist."

"I should think not, especially the latter; but the heiress goes about things differently. Besides, she is with him all the time in these "slumming" excursions. No doubt he makes good use of his opportunities."

"I can't believe Dick is mercenary."

"But possibly Miss Macy wouldn't be so religious were our old pastor her adviser instead of his handsome young assistant."

With burning cheeks, Laura shrank closer to the wall. She had no doubt whom they meant. Could they be right? Had she been mistaken in fancying herself a Christian? Had all these lofty thoughts no foundation at all in her soul but a love for the creature? No, emphatically. It was long before she had ever met the Reverend Richard Morrison that her heart had been opened to the beauties of the gospel. Could it have been even then that it was only because she wished to be like Miss Worthington that she had convinced herself otherwise? She tried to probe her motives. Impossible; rather than brook a continuance of those remarks she would leave it all. An opportunity offering her to emerge from her corner unobserved, she took advantage of it, and pleading headache as an excuse for not remaining during the evening, she went home.

The next day the newspapers remarked the departure of Miss Macy for her country home. Laura filled the house with guests, all of whom were the gayest, wildest spirits she could muster together under one roof. One riotous pleasure after another was entered into, Laura trying to lull those disturbing thoughts to rest. One would have thought she had never harbored another idea than to make her life a continuous holiday. Lucy came down for a few days and enjoyed herself to the fullest

extent. She was always fond of merry-makings, but did not put them first in her life. Possibly if she had not made the great change during her school days, she might have been a mere liver for pleasure at this time. That early decision made all the difference.

Her loving, consequently acute, penetration quickly espied a change in her friend, though she hardly comprehended the reason of it. Laura seemed a mere butterfly, utterly reckless of everything beyond getting the most pleasure out of existence. Lucy began to believe her mother was right and Laura's former seriousness but a passing fad. As for those grand ideas of a few months before, when Laura had declared her intentions of going to work like one of Besant's heroines and trying to ameliorate the condition of the downtrodden working girl, Miss Macy evidently had completely forgotten the utterance of such sentiments.

The heiress' return to town was marked by no change in her pursuits. She went to live with her aunt, much to that lady's satisfaction, and plunged into a vortex of gayety. Miss Macy's gowns, pursuits, and conquests were duly and daily chronicled by the scribes who did "society" for the papers. Lucy scarcely ever saw her friend, and Mr. Murdock only at rare intervals.

As for Morrison, he did not know what to think about it. He called one day at Mrs. Van Bergh's, having come across certain information in regard to one of Laura's former protégés which he thought would interest her. The servant ushered him into the drawing room

where Mrs. Van Bergh and her niece were entertaining a number of callers. When she saw the young clergyman, Laura hesitated a moment. She had not seen him since that memorable evening to her, and she felt somewhat awkward about the desertion. Then she came forward, greeting him most effusively: "My dear Mr. Morrison, it is an age since I saw you last. Do sit down while I pour you out some tea." He could not have been more dumbfounded had she stared at him through a lorgnette, for this sentence was followed up by others so contrary to her usual manner that he was not able to get in one serious word, nor even to tell her that Mrs. Jaines' Tom was earning a splendid salary at the new place Mr. Murdock had found him, which had been the real reason of his call.

He went away thoroughly dissatisfied and heartsick. He knew now what his sentiments had been in regard to Laura Macy. Why had he, after consecrating himself to his work, been drawn aside from it by a pretty face? As to Laura's fortune, he never bestowed a thought upon it. In spite of Mrs. Lewis' suspicions, Dick Morrison was *not* a fortune hunter. On his way home he tried to conjure up a good reason for the change in Laura's conduct. There was no change in his own feelings toward her. He knew now that he loved her, even better than his own soul, he said to himself. Without her, the world was all flat, stale, and unprofitable. He began to think that perhaps he had missed his vocation after all. He was not holy, unselfish enough to be one of the

priests of God. The mood was not one he could throw off at once, especially since he wished to make no one, not even Clyde Desmond, his confidant. He would wrestle with his pain alone with his Maker.

The last observation in the game of "Consequences" is, you know, "What the world said." Dick Morrison's world, the congregation of the First Church, had much to say about Miss Macy's dereliction and the assistant pastor's dejection, which latter was so manifest. Some said Laura had jilted the clergyman; others remarked *vice versa*. All agreed that it was a good thing, and that a butterfly should never wed a bee.

CHAPTER XII.

NAN'S HOME.

Whoever makes home seem to the young dearer and more happy, is a public benefactor.—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

IT was not much to look at on the outside, surely. A great, bare frame house, with no oriel or bay windows with antique facings, to relieve the sober, dismal monotony of its architecture. The roses climbing over the front door took away something of the bare look, however, and the garden distracted one's eye from the house. That garden was certainly a medley; bewildering masses of gay-hued poppies and hollyhocks growing cheek by jowl with sweet mignonette, violets, pansies, and dainty callas,—that is, when the last named were in season,—mariposa lilies, baby blue-eyes, “hen and chickens;” creamcups and buttercups also mingled with their cultivated sisters. It was not such a garden as one sees in the city.

Well, the people who owned the garden were not of the ordinary type to be found in cities, either. Dr. Dallas might have taken charge of a high-salaried parish in the East. His gifts fitted him for it, and he had influence, which is the main thing in these days; but he had chosen a home missionary's lot, and neither he nor his contented, merry little wife ever regretted the choice.

You know something about the way in which their work began in this Sierran town, or village, rather. Their daughter Nan was one part of the "sandwich," and Lucy Rathbone's school "chum." All the good qualities the latter claimed for her friend, were really hers.

At the present moment Nan was busy indoors, making paper pin wheels for four small children clustered about her knees. There was not anything bare or bleak-looking about the inside of that house. The furniture was old, but it had a comfortable, "homey" air; the paper on the walls was of a cheerful pattern, and the piano, and Nan's guitar in the corner, with a crowded bookcase, and a few good pictures on the walls, showed the initiated visitor that culture was not entirely unknown, even in a locality far from civilization. There were three boys in the family, blessed with the commonest of cognomens. They endured a vast amount of ignominy from their big sister, who often averred that she could by no means allow herself to be on familiar terms with "every Tom, Dick, and Harry"—her brothers' names. The youngest member of the circle was Lillian, called Bebe, for short, and who doubtless would carry the nickname until her dying day. By no means least in the boys' estimation, who considered him far nearer and dearer than any blood relation, was John Dale.

Life at Fern Ridge had freshened up wonderfully since Nan's advent. Dale felt himself cast somewhat in the background, when the school-girl's ideas began to "rule the roost." Who knows more than a recent graduate?

I fancy at no part of one's life has he that supreme confidence in his own powers that prevails when he is just eighteen and fresh from school. Nan rushed into everything with heart and soul. Her father playfully called her "his left hand."

"Why left?" pouted Nan.

"Why, you know John has been my right hand so long. I couldn't shift sides now."

So his daughter had to be satisfied to remain second best in this respect.

Nan finished the pin wheels and gave them to the little ones, one of whom was Bebe; the others, three of the former's scholars. Then she went into the study, where her father was meditating over his next day's sermon.

"Busy, father?" she asked.

"Not in the least, Nan. I am quite finished, and was only enjoying a quiet think. Anything important in the wind?"

"No, sir. I only wanted to say to somebody how happy I feel to think that Tom and Dick are to be baptized to-morrow night."

"Yes. I am glad that of their own accord they have taken the step."

"You see they look up so to John. He exerts a splendid influence over them."

"Yes. John is a noble fellow. In all my experience with men I have known few nobler."

"Isn't it odd, father, when one thinks how it all came about? Lucy Rathbone's hero, that Mr. Desmond I

have told you about, was the one who found our hero, John Dale."

"There was another one too, you remember—Dr. Thorne. Without him, John would hardly have been where he is to-day."

"We can't be sure. Wouldn't you love to see the doctor? I should, I know."

"We may, sometime. John says he will make him visit us all, some day."

Nan was silent for a few moments, seemingly thinking over something before she spoke. Then she said:

"I wish, father, John could find, or we could find for him, that little brother he told us about."

"I have no doubt the child is dead," returned the minister.

"I hate to think so. Better that, though, than a life of poverty, or possibly crime."

"Why, Nan, there is no reason to think the little Edward should have come to poverty. John assured me that his step-father was in fairly comfortable circumstances."

"Yes, father," answered Nan. "But I have often thought that they could not have been so completely lost had not some misfortune come upon them."

"They were in God's hands, Nan."

"I know. But John would give so much to be sure about their fate. I would be perfectly happy could I be the means of restoring his brother to his arms."

Nan's fervor was so real that Dr. Dallas could not laugh at her, though he felt inclined to dub her a roman-

tic little puss. He could understand quite well her enthusiasm over John. Every one who met him felt in the same way. And John was so grateful for every expression of kindness or sympathy. Gratitude is a rare quality in these days. There are so many people who take every good as a matter of course.

While the minister and daughter conversed, the door opened, and a freckled countenance, surmounted by an aureole of golden hair, peeped in. "A letter, Nan," the somewhat grimy hand reaching the article to her outstretched fingers.

"Thanks, Harry."

"All right, sis,"—the door closing again. Small courtesies were seldom omitted in the Dallas home circle.

"From Lucy," said Nan. "I'll read it now, father, if you are willing." She hastily scanned its contents.

"Oh, father!" she then exclaimed. She wants me to come and spend a month with her. She says she has so many things she wishes to talk to me about, schemes for helping poor people, and all that. Letters can't explain it all."

"How nice it will be for you, Nan! Your mother was saying, yesterday, you needed a change of some sort, after working so hard."

"But just at this time, how can I?"

"Here is your mother now. She will be able to decide it for you, and I think I know how it will be."

Mrs. Dallas entered,—a tidy, plump matron, with kind blue eyes and most bewitching dimples, of which Nan's

own were counterparts. Let into the contents of Lucy's letter, she soon silenced all Nan's objections.

"But the kindergarten, mother?"

"Jennie Lacy is quite competent to look after it, and would be glad of the chance."

"Then my Sunday-school classes?"

"John will take one, and Tom or Dick the other."

"The sewing school?"

"Can't I look after that?"

"But you have so much to do, mother," pleaded Nan. "And there is the elocution class, only just begun."

"Your father will look after it."

"Harry and Bebe need watching all the time. They are bound to get into mischief."

"My dear girl, are they orphans?" mildly asked the mother. "Where are their parents?"

Nan laughed. She could not help it, as she began to consider how she had fancied the Fern Ridge world so dependent upon her own exertions.

"I'm glad, *mater*," she said. "For, really, I am wild to go, and would have been awfully disappointed if anything had occurred to prevent."

There are not many country girls whose impediments could have been so easily removed as Nan's, when invited to visit a city friend. Dress, potent word, had not been mentioned. Nan was by no means a so-called "guy," either; her gowns always being becoming and to the last degree, upon her school chum's authority, stylish. But where another girl would put the gown and

bonnet forward as reasons for delay, schools and work were Nan's substitutes.

It was arranged that she should leave on the following Tuesday, when two other girls from Fern Ridge would also be going on the train, their company warding off lonesomeness during the rather extended journey. Jennie Lacy and John Dale agreed at once to look after the classes Nan felt so sorry at leaving, and her mind was thus at rest.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CHANCE ACQUAINTANCE.

Perchance hereafter to have remembered these things, will please you.—TRANSLATION FROM VIRGIL.

“I MAY find your long-lost brother, John ; who knows?” observed Nan to the young man who was her escort to the station upon the eventful day of her journey to Lucy’s.

“If you only might !” The very thought lit up the ordinarily quiet blue eyes of the other.

“What did he look like when you last saw him? Do you remember?”

“Yes, indeed. He was a smaller counterpart of myself, my mother used to say. Our features were singularly alike.”

“I would know him at once, then. But what is his surname? He was only your half-brother, you said.”

His name is Dale. Mine was Walton ; but my mother had me change it when she married Edward Dale.”

“I’ll remember. Good-bye.”

Nan and her companions had a pleasant journey, nearly all of which was through a completely novel country. By some unforeseen circumstance their train was delayed, so that it was quite dark when they reached the city. Nan had written beforehand to Lucy that no one need

meet her, for she would arrive early in the afternoon, and could take a car direct to the house. The other two girls knew just where they were going, so if it had not been dark, neither of them would have minded the delay in time. However, three young women, very tired and so sleepy that it was hard for them to keep their eyes open, must naturally desire to reach their destination as soon as possible. They gave their checks into the transfer agent's hands, and then hurried along to the street car. Nan was the leader. Reaching a car, she caught what she supposed was the hand of one of her companions, saying: "Come, let us hurry. I'm awfully tired, and we must try and get to our friends' houses before nine." She landed her burden quickly in the car, and then found she had made a great mistake, as the hand she held was that of a man. His face was wreathed in smiles, while Nan was blushing a rosy red. She begged a thousand pardons, and then jumped up to look for her friends.

But the car had already started. Looking out of the window, she saw the girls had entered another car, probably thinking that she was lost in the crowd. This hardly lessened her embarrassment; for beside her sat the man whose hand she had so impetuously seized. She stole a look at him. He was not very formidable in appearance. He was about thirty-five years of age, perhaps, with genial dark eyes, and wearing a full beard of sunny brown. He was accompanied by a little boy, whose thin, pinched features appeared to point to a recent illness. Something

in the lad's appearance seemed reminiscent to Nan. She wondered where she had seen eyes like his before. The expression too, reminded her of somebody she knew, and could not at the moment recall.

Her street gained, she got out and speedily reached Lucy's house, being at once received and made much of by her friends. Lucy was full of queries as to why Nan had arrived so late, and as to her adventures on the way. The one of the hand-clasp and the car was duly laughed at.

"Quite a romance, Nan," said Lucy. "Wouldn't it be curious if you should meet him again?"

"I shouldn't mind," replied Nan. "He had a good face. The little boy interested me the most, though."

When she had divested herself of her wraps, and of some of the dust of travel, Lucy suggested the dining room.

"It will have to be a light dinner, though," she explained; "for we finished long ago, and the boys made sad havoc with the roast."

Nan's appetite was easily satisfied, after which she was taken into the library to be made acquainted with Lucy's family. Clyde Desmond was also present. Of late he spent nearly all of his evenings with the Rathbones. They all liked him immensely, the boys especially considering that they held a mortgage upon his person. For anything else, both Mr. and Mrs. Rathbone, knowing his avowed sentiments in regard to matrimony and his impetuous condition as to property, never thought of him in

a nearer connection. Lucy made him the confidant of her countless projects.

Desmond was interested at once when he heard of Nan's adventure.

"I believe that was Dr. Thorne," he said. "He has dark eyes, a golden-brown beard, a pleasant smile, and he has lately added to his long list of protégés a little boy whom he accidentally knocked over on the street one day, and whom he has since kept in his own house. He says he is going to train Teddy up to be his assistant."

"Teddy?" interposed Lucy. "I wonder if it could be my lost scholar? What is his last name?"

"Daly, I think. Something like that, anyhow. Come to consider, I believe he has a look of that little chap who spent one day under your tuition. This one is clothed, washed, and in his right mind, though."

"Well, I'll ask Jimmie McCloud what my Teddy's surname is. Jimmie is quite a model now; comes every Sunday, and has brought in three new scholars."

"Yes, and they all appear to like their teacher."

"Their teacher loves them," said Lucy.

"Dirty faces and all?" asked Clyde, playfully.

Nan fell in with the subject of mission schools at once, especially Desmond's Mission. She could scarcely comprehend how the somewhat over-fastidious Lucy could be reconciled to mingling with children who were not always free from dirt. At school, Lucy's views had been wide, but had never embraced this phase of life. She had not been a girl who could bestow the same caresses

upon a little one picked out of the gutter as upon a curled, white-robed darling in its mother's arms. Nan was not the only one who had noticed the change in her friend.

When the two were exchanging their little confidences in Lucy's room later on, Nan asked :

“When am I to see your wonderful Mr. Morrison? I haven't forgotten his face, I assure you.”

“He never comes here now, but you'll hear him preach Sunday evening. You can't imagine how changed he is. Even Clyde, his closest friend, doesn't know the reason. If he were a Catholic, I should believe him to be doing a private penance for some fault.”

“Perhaps he is.”

“Nonsense! Dick is about the holiest, best man I ever heard of.”

“But, Lucy, you haven't said a word about Laura. What is she doing now? I haven't had a line from her for an age. It seems strange when we recall how intimate we were. I cannot reconcile myself to the thought that our friendship should share the fate of so many girl attachments. What would become of our ‘sandwich’ if one of the outside pieces should fall away.”

“Well, Laura is another person I can't pretend to fathom. She has as many moods as a chameleon. You heard of her aunt's death, did you not?”

“No. Up our way news is an almost unknown commodity. You said nothing about it in your letters.”

“Laura is teaching kindergarten, now. It is a part of the course of our public education, and she is an unpaid

assistant. It is said that she has taken it up with very great enthusiasm. She never did do anything by halves, you know. We must manage in some way to get her back into our select companionship. We'll visit her, some day."

Nan more than heartily concurred in her friend's purpose, and both girls thought most earnestly how it might be brought about.

CHAPTER XIV.

A NEW START.

The language of excitement is at best but picturesque merely. You must be calm before you can utter oracles.—THOREAU.

MRS. VAN BERGH'S death had occurred quite suddenly, shocking Laura into seriousness at the very moment when she had brought herself to believe that the life of a social favorite is the wisest and best end of existence. After the funeral she went to her guardian's—the thought of staying solitary and alone at "Craggs" was distasteful to her. Once she had found that solitude delightful. Now, however, she could not bear the thought of it. She carried too many perplexing thoughts, and she wanted company.

The world did not banish the heiress at once from the area of its interest. It could see no reason for a change in her mode of life. Some of her more ardent fashionable friends determined there should not be if they could help it. She received many calls of condolence, as sincere as such usually are.

"As soon as your mourning is over, we shall have you with us again, shall we not?" The speaker was one of Laura's new intimates, a gay society belle.

"I don't know," answered Laura. "I am inclined to think it all a delusion and a snare." Her sober face

gave the words emphasis, and her companion went away thinking that grief had affected the heiress' mind.

Mr. Murdock found his ward in this mood more of a riddle than ever, and one that he was totally unable to solve. After a few weeks of moping, she decided that the country was after all the best place for her. Quite alone this time she went down to "Craggs." She could not bear the thought of inviting those friends of her butterfly period of existence whose very presence, so teeming with gayety and lightness, would be uncongenial to her now. Lucy was at the seaside with her mother. Besides, she had seen very little of Lucy during the past season. She would have written to Nan, but the long silence maintained between them—her own fault, of course—rendered this course distasteful. One day a bright thought struck her, which she immediately acted upon. Miss Worthington, now, as Laura knew, at leisure during her vacation, was written to, and immediately accepted the invitation. Laura looked forward to her coming with eager anticipation. She had so much to tell her, and on so many points she wanted her advice. It is a most helpful factor in any girl's life to have a teacher to whom she can appeal for sympathy and aid. Certainly it was a blessing to one situated as our heiress was.

Miss Worthington's arrival was a happy moment to both her and her pupil. Laura could not help the tears coming when she remembered with what different eyes she had looked at things when enjoying that good woman's confidence. It was not long before Miss

Worthington was in possession of all the circumstances of her former pupil's life since their parting. One thing Laura held back—the overheard conversation that brought forth such results. She did not analyze closely her reasons for this. If she had she might have discovered something that would have furnished food for more serious thought than any that had yet suggested itself to her. But it was sufficient reason that the imputations appeared so unjust that the very remembrance of them made her cheeks flame.

Palliating as far as possible her father's crime, she gave Miss Worthington an outline of the story which might ultimately deprive her of her fortune.

“Will you have nothing, Laura, if you succeed in finding these heirs and restoring to them their own?”

“Mr. Murdock says ‘‘Craggs’’ is mine from my mother. Besides, my father's efforts doubled the original sum in the tin box. My guardian says that sharing it would be quite enough restitution to make. But I sometimes feel that perhaps I must sacrifice it all.”

“You may be right. Perhaps, though, they may never appear. These Waltons may be dead.”

“I fear so at times, and my father's hope of making restitution will then be left unfulfilled.”

“Did the detectives trace them at all?”

“Yes, they found out that the wife had married again, but finally went away, widowed a second time. Some of her neighbors thought she started for California. No one was sure. A son was born to her and her second

husband. The first husband's son was a wild boy, they said, and had run away at an earlier period."

"A curious tale. Doesn't it seem wonderful that after all these years one can even trace as far as you have done?"

"Yes, but now we are at fault."

"Did you ever think, Laura," asked Miss Worthington, "what you would do if called upon to give up every cent of your fortune?"

"The real possibility, I am afraid, never occurred to me."

"But it might happen. These heirs of John Walton, if found, might drag your father's name in the dust, and take from you everything. They might make no allowance for the terrible temptation to which he yielded. As the price of their silence, they might strip you of all your possessions. The passion for wealth is so rapacious. It may be with these, and having the prospect of so much they may demand all."

"They would not be so cruel—they could not. Why, if I did not choose to follow out my father's desires, they would never know at all."

"Ah, yes! But you have chosen, and they will know. I would not have you draw back. You cannot do otherwise than you are doing and be yourself. But it is a good thing for us to face the worst that could happen, and then in a measure we are prepared for it."

They had many such conversations. Miss Worthington was a great exponent of the idea that every young

woman should be trained in some special line of work. Laura readily fell in with her opinions, and decided to perfect herself in some branch of practical labor, that should her great wealth be taken from her, she need not be perfectly helpless.

“There was that girl in Jean Ingelow’s ‘Off the Skelligs,’ ” she observed. “She learned wood engraving, but I know I would never have the patience to try that. And I know the horrors would possess me if I were obliged to drum scales and runs into unwilling little fingers, as a music teacher.”

“You might be a school teacher.”

“I am not wise enough, dear Miss Worthington. I might go into a store.”

“Why, Laura, you would lose your health at once. Besides, you couldn’t live on four dollars a week.”

“Others do, don’t they? You know I always wanted to find the true ‘ins and outs’ of a working girl’s life.”

“Some day you may be called upon to do so. At present, what do you think of studying the kindergarten system? Being rich, you need not take the salary offered assistants. You could donate it to the cause.”

“Lovely! Miss Worthington, you are the queen of advisers. I always longed to do something of that kind. Mrs. Cooper is one of my heroines.”

Miss Worthington let Laura’s enthusiasm vent itself to the fullest extent in words before she explained the details of the plan. Perhaps some of the dryer stages of accomplishing the knowledge required put a damper at

first upon Laura's ecstasies. She liked to jump at things quickly, with no stupid "isms" to come between. Her musical knowledge and talent, with her great love for children, made this suggestion of becoming a kindergarten worker more welcome to her than any other suggestion Miss Worthington might have offered. That clever woman, who understood girl nature so thoroughly, felt satisfied with the result of her advice.

Laura rejoiced that she had invited her old teacher at just the time when her mind was ripe for her counselings. When Miss Worthington returned to her school, Laura was herself again, quite a contrast to the morbid, wretched individual who had sought "Craggs" the week before. She began at once to acquire the learning necessary for her projected labors. She entered into it with all the enthusiasm and thoroughness of her nature. She did so as much as though all her means of support were going to depend upon it. For anything she knew they would.

Mr. Murdock was quite willing for his ward to embark in anything that would re-establish her peace of mind. When she began, after her graduation, by throwing herself into Mr. Morrison's work, he considered it but a passing whim, which would soon work itself out. In his time, girls had been content to let their brothers and fathers see the practical parts of life outside. In religious matters, women confined themselves mainly to distributing tracts. He had once suggested this to Laura, but she was extremely indignant. "God did not endow

us with souls only," she exclaimed. "He gave hearts and bodies too. The poor, starved bodies of these miserable creatures must be looked after first. We must enter their hearts before we can discover to them the fact that they have souls."

Then, all at once, soon after avowing these fine sentiments, Mr. Murdock was astonished to see Miss Macy veer completely around, change her lofty opinions, letting the poor people take care of their own bodies, hearts and souls, and she herself start in for a season of society. He did not know what to make of his ward, who now went the pace as rapidly as the most avowed votary of pleasure. This third change of base was surely distracting; but so long as Miss Laura kept within the bounds of propriety, he felt called upon to protect her opinions. He had great confidence in her integrity of character. Her principles, he felt sure, were firm and true. He was considerably bewildered by her somewhat rapid social oscillations. But as to her ultimately coming out all right he had no doubt whatever, and he stood by her.

CHAPTER XV

SOME OF JOHN DALE'S WORK.

Every man's work pursued steadily tends to become an end in itself, and so to bridge over the loveless chasms in his life.—GEORGE ELIOT.

JOHN DALE has only appeared fitfully thus far on these pages, like a will-o'-the-wisp; his name on everybody's lips, himself a stranger. Personally he impressed one as a monument of strength. He was not the kind of man one would fancy as having been the victim of a habit, and that habit, opium. He was a tall young fellow, slender of frame, yet with a breadth in the chest and shoulders that one generally accords to the athlete. While he was never ill, only he himself knew what inroads the vicious courses he had followed in his early manhood had made upon his stock of health. As he looked back upon that life, he loathed it. It could never seem to him but a dream, as many repentant sinners say their former lives appear.

When John Dale was sent out from the hospital a cured man, he found his mind had undergone as complete a change as his body. Dr. Thorne had given him a few lifts morally, but none to bring him into intimate communion with Christ. The doctor had not come quite to the believing point himself. However, Dale did not for

a moment harbor the idea that it was one's mere circumstances that had brought him within Clyde's notice first, and then under the other's influence. "There is something at the bottom of it all," he said. Then one of the hospital nurses, a true Christian worker, began to talk to him. Gradually, lessons he had learned in his boyish days came back to his memory, lessons learned from a praying mother. The nurse told him of Christ. He was in a softened, receptive mood. He believed.

"Go, and sin no more," was the command to the penitent. John Dale obeyed. In fact, the desire to sin had passed away. All the billows having rolled over him, he was left pure in every purpose of his soul. The scars of the past remained, but only as scars. The first thing John did, upon learning the wonderful secret of happiness, was to impart it to Dr. Thorne.

"I wish I could believe as you do, Dale," said the latter. "But I can't. I'm a doubter."

"'An honest doubter.' You know the old saying, doctor."

"Yes, I know it. But that doesn't alter my case."

"I am going to pray for you."

"Do, my boy. But I can't think that prayer will do any good. What I try to do is to work out all I can honestly believe, and let the rest go."

"God understands." John spoke from sincere conviction.

Discharged cured, the young man looked out for work of both kinds. It came, and in the same place.

The doctor found his protégé a position as assistant superintendent of a mine in Northern California. There John met Dr. Dallas, and his life's work began. He was first among the miners, the builders of the little church of which Dr. Dallas was pastor. In such an erratic, knock-about life, it is not at all likely that John had become highly educated. He was thus just the style of man to appeal to a rough miner's heart. There is no class of men more generously inclined than these miners. Their hearts are naturally much softer than those of people living in a big city, where money-getting is a hardening process. As John labored among these men, he became more and more attached to them, and they to him. They would almost rather hear his little "talks" than those of their adored Dr. Dallas.

"I am positively getting jealous," said the latter, laughingly, one day.

"You don't need to, sir," was the answer. "But you don't know what a boon it is to me—so lately a wretched outcast—to feel that there is some one now who really cares whether I live or die."

In the meanwhile, John was devoting his spare moments to gaining culture. He read with Dr. Dallas, who superintended his studies. Nan, after her return from boarding school, gave him additional help. She said she had never met so ambitious a pupil before. He never attempted to shirk a task, nor did one appear too difficult for him to master.

"Making up for lost time," was his own explanation.

Together, he and Nan established classes in elocution and singing, free to all those who would join. John supplied the voice—he was the possessor of a magnificent baritone—and Nan the cultivation and method. Her own voice was a rather weak, though sweet mezzo-soprano. There is no question that the miners and their families enjoyed these classes. You may imagine the blessings the Dallases had brought to this camp, when one considers that before their advent there had been in this section no schools, no church, no culture of any kind, and no outside communication, save perhaps a week-old daily newspaper from San Francisco.

Upon Nan's return from school she had been astonished at the even greater improvements that had been made in her absence.

“Why, father, the saloon has gone!” she exclaimed, as they walked home from the station.

“Yes, Nan. Thank God.”

“How did you do it, father?”

“How can you ask? Hasn't it been your mother's and my constant prayer ever since we came here? Last week, the miners finally voted for its closure. Jake, shut off from their patronage, decided to shut up shop at once.”

“Where has he gone?” asked Nan. “I'm sorry that we have lost that pretty little girl of his.”

“We haven't lost her,” returned her father. “Lowndes was called back East by the death of an aunt, who left him a farm there, and had to sell his grocery store here.

Jake bought him out, and is therefore still a prominent citizen of Fern Ridge. Better than that, he comes to church now and then, and seems somewhat interested. Liquor is responsible for much more harm than seems to belong to it directly. I have strong hopes of Jake and a good many others now."

"How lovely!" said Nan. "Oh, father, the longer I live, the more I am impressed with the truthfulness of the declaration that God's ways are past finding out."

John Dale had been a prime factor in the closing of that saloon. He had never been a drinker himself, and could not talk temperance from his own experience. But he had been worse; and at first it was hard for him to make the miners understand how much worse. He had called newspapers, magazine articles, and photographs to his aid, until finally he had impressed every man with the horrors of the consequences incident to opium smoking.

"But that ain't whisky," said one of the men, one day. "There ain't no comparison between the two things."

"They are both habits," returned John.

"Well, we have to treat our friends sometime or other. There ain't no easier way as I knows on than 'Have a glass?'"

Probably there is not a place on the globe where the "treating" system, this "Come in and take something," has grown to such huge proportions as in California. Perhaps it is the fault of the "days of '49," when houses

were scarce, good women more so, and saloons the only inviting and luxurious places to spend an evening in. It is hard to preach temperance where its needs are not yet felt. However, let the work go on. In time it will gain a foothold, as will the Sunday law, now in force, to some extent at least, in almost every large Eastern city, though entirely ignored in California.

John's bold and bright arguments finally made headway in the minds of Fern Ridge's male inhabitants. The women gave him all the aid in their power. As you know, Jake, the saloon's proprietor, changed his trade. He was not the loser thereby. Men dropped in to see him, and bought peanuts for the children instead of whisky for themselves. Unlike those in Eastern cities, the village druggist was not obliged to lay in a large supply of alcoholic "medicine," to supply a long-felt want. When the miners renounced anything, they gave it up for good.

Jake laid in a supply of the best coffee, and the Fern Ridge people created a new reputation for themselves—that of "the champion coffee drinkers" of the section.

John Dale, in all his labors, was animated by a purpose. "Do unto others," and unto him much had been given. Only once did he feel a desire to retrograde—the reader knows how the temptation was frustrated by the prayers and efforts of the Dallas family. At present he did his best in the place appointed.

"Sometime I must do more," he said to his pastor. "I feel that I must tell the world about that wretched

class of people among whom my lot was so long thrown. I have not the education to become a preacher, but I can write a book, perhaps. Let me study—and wait. It is no credit to me that I have the personal experience which makes words so powerful. But since I have the experience, I ought to make it serve me and help others. I am going to try, anyway.”

CHAPTER XVI.

A LITTLE LEAVEN.

There is only one failure in life possible; and that is, not to be true to the best one knows.—CANON FARRAR.

SNIP, snap! Chatter, chatter!

What a noise a few girls can make when they are gathered together in one room! These were sewing away very busily, making garments for the tiny invalids at the Children's Hospital, and for the poor little ones attending the city kindergartens. Nowadays, the girls are all charitably inclined, and if it is not kindergartens and hospitals that take up their time, it is flower missions and infant shelters, or some enterprise of that nature. These girls all belonged to what is termed "the Society Set," but if one only investigated he would find a vast amount of good in what at first appears a mere group of frivolous, empty rattlepates. Severe Christians are often too ready to condemn the more worldly members of their church, forgetting that Christ named the chief virtue, charity. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," is a solemn warning, and one that will bear a more faithful illustration from many who perhaps would think themselves guiltless in this regard.

Jean Douglas spoke first, all needles suspended in

the air, while she voiced a question: "Heard the latest?"

"No, what is it?"

"Laura Macy has gone to teaching regularly in a kindergarten."

"No, really? She'll be after us for aprons, then, won't she?"

"Very likely, though she is rich enough to buy aprons for every kindergarten in existence."

"I like Laura, she is so clever."

"Yes, indeed. But what do you think is Lucy Rathbone's latest fad? Not content with taking a class in Mr. Desmond's mission school, I hear she has regularly adopted ten of her scholars—gives them their clothes, you know, and everything."

"Boys or girls?"

"Boys—regular little ragamuffins."

"The idea! What a notion!"

The door opened and the subject of their remarks entered, accompanied by one whom she introduced as "Miss Dallas."

"What's the news?" asked Lucy, after seating herself, and taking out her sewing materials.

"We hear Miss Lucy Rathbone has become a saint."

Lucy laughed heartily. She was not one of those who take offense easily.

"Now, say, girls," she remarked. "Do I look a fit subject for canonization?"

"Not with those cheeks," said Nan.

Then the girls began to talk all at once: "Is it really true?" "From the mission school?" "Beggar boys." "Why didn't you take girls?" "What did you, ever do it for?" And so on, and on. When they finally paused to recover their breath, Lucy asked:

"Where shall I begin? What do you want to know?"

"At the beginning, of course. We want all the 'ins and outs,' and how you first came to conceive such a project."

"It's not much of a story," Lucy began. "At boarding school we had a lovely teacher who showed us the meaning of a true Christian life. Nan, Laura Macy, and I began to take broader views of humanity. At least, I did. Nan always was imbued with a missionary spirit. Then when I came home, of course I began by taking a class in the Sunday-school. I haven't given up my girls now, remember, and I like them exceedingly; but, do you know, I almost think I might as well talk to so many sticks of wood as to those eight proper, well-bred, well-dressed little maids.

"In the first place, they regard me very much as if I was one of themselves. Some days, when I think I have delivered a very telling address, and perhaps made some impression upon their stony little hearts, Lila Jones will speak up and say: 'Oh, Miss Rathbone! Excuse me for interrupting you, but are you going to the charity kettledrum?' or else Belle Barton will remark, 'Beg pardon, but will you tell me where you bought those

lovely gloves?' or Grace Ogilvie will want to know how I enjoyed the last symphony concert. Of course I do my best to check such nonsense, but sometimes it will come out."

"Well," put in Jean, at this juncture, "we used to do the same in our infant days. Don't you remember how discouraged poor Miss Parker used to look, sometimes?"

"Yes," added one of the other girls. "And see, here we are sober and staid church-members now."

"I know you're right," said Lucy, "but I hoped my girls would be different, somehow; and they weren't, not a bit. That is why I was so eager to help Mr. Desmond at his school. It seemed as if I had at last made a beginning at being good for something."

"As if you weren't good enough before. Why, Lucy Rathbone, what do you call being good for something? What do you call this work we are engaged upon now?"

"I know," said Lucy, in reply to this whirlwind; "we make clothes for the kindergarten children, and fancy work to sell for their benefit, and give what remains to no end of worthy causes; but to me that doesn't seem enough. Since I left school, I haven't accomplished anything, and I meant to do so much. What does joining the church mean if one isn't willing to work for one's Master?"

"Now, don't be a prig, Lucy, nor a preacher," replied Jean. "Don't you imagine we know our duty to God as well as you do yours?"

"Why, of course," Lucy replied. "That's what I meant to say. For myself, I found I could do more than I had been doing, and must attend to it."

"That's all right," said one of the other girls, who had been silent during the entire conversation, "I wish you would take me to that mission, Lucy. Such work would just suit me."

"Me, too," said another girl, and then another, until all, even Jean, had pleaded to be taken there the next Sunday. Lucy was glad enough to accept the girls' proffers of help, and Nan hardly knew what to make of it all. This explains the large influx of assistants at the mission the following Sunday.

After the excitement had somewhat subsided, Jean suggested :

"After all, Lucy, you didn't tell us how you came to adopt those boys."

"What boys?"

"We heard you had adopted the ten youths composing your class, and were preparing to look after them for the rest of their natural lives."

"How silly ! Where did you hear such a story?"

"It came by a little bird, you know, the usual way in which such news flies. Isn't it true?"

"Make the ten one, and then call it protection, not adoption, and you would be nearer the solution."

"Really? Isn't it curious what tales one has brought to her, expecting her instant acceptance?"

"One of Laura's former protégés, and also one of

Mr. Morrison's, was left an orphan, so the latter asked me to look after him once in a while. Laura gave Mr. Morrison the money to pay for the boy's board and lodging for some years to come, or until he is able to support himself. I took him into my Sunday-school class, and weekdays look after his stockings and his buttons. That is all."

CHAPTER XVII.

A DISCOVERY.

Growing thought makes growing revelation.—GEORGE ELIOT.

NAN'S stay in the city necessarily had to be short, therefore Lucy wished to crowd as many delights into it as possible. One whole day was given up to a visit to Miss Worthington and the school where they had gained their most prized instruction. From the principal they learned more of Laura than they could have gleaned from any other source. Miss Worthington impressed upon them the duty of trying to draw the heiress again into intimacy.

"She works too hard, I know," she explained. "And while the change is good for her mind, if she is not careful her health will suffer. Laura always ran to extremes in her schemes, you remember."

The two girls took Miss Worthington's words to heart, and the next day dropped in upon Laura at the scene of her labors. They chose the noon hour, that they might find her at leisure and so enjoy a chat. Laura was undisguisedly rejoiced to see them. It seemed to her ages since they three had sworn eternal comradeship. At first their talk was about their old schoolmates. Even a year of absence or separation places past circumstances in the light of "old times." Lucy and Nan, knowing

their call must be limited, were anxious to pass to the subject of Laura's work. They noticed that she looked less blooming than formerly—her whole frame had a fagged-out look. Kindergarten teaching is perhaps the most trying to the instructor of any phase of school work.

"I love it," said Laura. "It is not in the least drudgery to me. Then, in accepting the position of assistant I knew I was not defrauding anybody who really needed a position. One could not live upon the salary attached to the office. The principal is a lovely woman, and I learn new lessons of patience and charity from her every day."

The principal came in afterward and Nan and Lucy made her acquaintance. She was a sweet little blonde, doing a large amount of good in an unostentatious way. I consider all teachers in the free kindergartens as heroines. They work hard, much harder than an ordinary school-teacher, and even the highest pay is less than that given to a novice in the other departments. Their labors are not even over after school hours, for then they are expected to visit certain of their charges at their homes and report to the society about the conditions of things they find there. Yes, indeed, they are worthy of admiration.

When one o'clock struck, the mites trooped in, some of them looking as if a breath of wind would blow them over, poverty and ill health being plainly written upon their pinched faces. All were fairly clean—cleanliness being a quality insisted upon at all these child

gardens. The principal had them go through a number of their games for the visitors, something the little ones liked immensely. When the regular routine began, Nan and Lucy said good-bye, Laura making them promise that they would come and spend the following day with her, it being Saturday, a holiday.

Mr. Murdock's housekeeper was almost hilarious, and in her excitement lost every one of her commas, when Laura told her that she might expect company to lunch.

"I'm glad enough to hear it," she said. "It's nice to think that we'll have some young ladies in the house; for lonesome enough it is with you gone all day and no callers."

Nan and Lucy came early. They still retained a school-girl fondness for being invited out to a luncheon, which is, unless the property of a dyspeptic, a dissipation the feminine heart is always pleased to enjoy to the fullest extent.

"By the way," said Laura, in the course of their conversation. "Guess whom I had the pleasure of meeting the other day?"

"Dick Morrison? But no, that wouldn't be at all out of the common. Are you good at guessing, Nan? I never was. You might as well tell us at once, Laura."

"It was Dr. Thorne. Mr. Morrison, you remember, used to talk about him all the time, extolling his virtues, you know, yet regretting that he was an unbeliever."

"He isn't, is he?" asked Nan. "John doesn't think so."

“He says the doctor talks very differently from what he used to. He has his own and independent way of looking at and stating things, but he thinks he does accept the essential truth of Christianity. He believes that he will come out all right if he is not already.”

“Speaking of unbelievers, I came across these two thoughts the other day,” said Laura. “They are somewhat alike. Let me read them to you.” She took up a little book in which she jotted down any sentences or sentiments that happened to impress her as worth retaining in the course of her readings. “This is number one: ‘The way to get rid of doubts in religion is to go to work with all our might and *practise* what we *don’t* doubt; and that you can do, whatever your calling or occupation.’ And this, number two: ‘Try to put well in practice what you already know; in so doing you will in good time, discover the hidden things which you now inquire about.’ The former is from Mrs. Stowe’s book, ‘My Wife and I.’ The latter is a bit of the wisdom of Rembrandt.”

“Did you always read books in that way, Laura? I mean, picking out the best from them, and keeping it in your note-book?” Lucy asked this, for she only skipped through books herself, leaving out the dry parts, and not getting much good out of her reading when all was told.

“Not always,” answered Laura, smiling. “When I first began to enjoy the knowledge that I could read without having to spell the hard words aloud, I preferred

fairy tales, because they were all plot and no conversation. When I came to higher reading, I fancy I cared for nothing but the story. Then, when at school we studied literature, I read critically, caring for nothing in my books but the author's style. If it was too didactic or was at all slipshod, indicating either carelessness or ignorance, I cast the book aside, unread. Now I am wiser, I look always for the thoughts of the writer. Those I like I copy out in my little book. I always loved to linger over my dessert, you know."

Nan had been thinking.

"Do you know, Laura," she said, when the latter had ended her little explanation, "I think after that little bit of Mrs. Stowe's philosophy, one can understand better the meaning of working out one's own salvation?"

"Yes. In my own case I found that working in a good cause brought renewed faith in the cause itself."

"Would you think me impertinent, Laura, if I asked you what caused that sudden change in you—when you left all your projects for your protégés unfinished and started in upon your career in society?" Nan asked this question.

"Dick Morrison told Clyde Desmond that he felt quite crushed one day when he called upon you, and was treated as if he was a callow youth, just introduced," added Lucy.

Laura blushed. "Did he say that?" she asked.

"Well, it may not have been exactly those words, but something to the same effect."

Laura was saved the trouble of explaining, for luncheon was announced, and for the next hour their talk reverted to old times, and precluded unpleasant personalities.

Among other topics, John Dale was mentioned.

“Isn’t it curious?” said Nan. “His name isn’t Dale at all. I never knew it until the day I left home.”

“What is it?” asked Lucy.

“It is Walton. You know he had a stepfather, and took his name.”

Laura started when Nan mentioned the name of Walton. She had been treated to a number of false alarms in regard to the name, but each time she thought herself on the verge of a discovery. She would question Nan, anyhow. The conjunction of a stepfather might be only a curious coincidence.

Nan, always ready to talk about John Dale—or Walton, perhaps, one should call him now—was glad to find a ready listener in Laura. Everything in regard to John’s life that she knew she poured into the heiress’ ears. The latter was pretty sure she was on the right track at last, but resolved to keep her suspicions to herself until they were verified. Only three persons knew anything about the matter—Miss Worthington, Mr. Murdock, and herself. The detectives had merely worked at Mr. Murdock’s bidding, but were quite in the dark as to the reason of the man’s being wanted. Nan only thought Laura an appreciative admirer of John’s nobility, and Lucy was not listening at all. She had heard it all many

times, and truth to say, was slightly weary of hearing the virtues extolled of a youth she had never seen.

Laura had little doubt now but that she was on the eve of discovering what she had long sought. She was glad that she could now fulfill her father's behests. But she could not help having some anxiety, and wondering what the result would be to herself. She was no less determined, however, to do right, let the result be to her what it might.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A BUSY SUNDAY.

The chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do the best we can.—EMERSON.

IT was a rainy morning in early December, the day following Laura's luncheon. Outside, the sidewalks were damp, the atmosphere heavy with mist, and the patter of the rain made sober music upon the window panes. In the Rathbone dining room, all was cheerful. The family was gathered around the breakfast table, upon which a dainty meal of beefsteak, Saratoga chips, coffee, and hot rolls, was waiting to be eaten.

Only Lawrence looked in any way out of harmony with the surroundings.

"I think it horrid to be routed out of bed at this unearthly hour," he grumbled. "Don't you, Miss Dallas?"

Nan smiled; but his father pointed to the clock, upon the dial of which the hands indicated nine.

"Unearthly? What do you call that?" he asked, patting the cheek of the scowling lad.

"Bad enough to have to get up in time for church," he grumbled again, "without having to rise an hour earlier, so that Lu can go to a new Sunday-school."

"Well, it is only for once," observed Mrs. Rathbone, in a pacifying tone. "I myself, Miss Dallas, do not

consider it a good plan for Lucy to turn the day of rest into a day of toil."

"But, mamma," deprecated Lucy, "Mr. Morrison asked me, and you know the old saying: 'It is better to wear out than rust out.'"

"That is a wicked maxim," now observed Mr. Rathbone; "and has done more harm than can easily be remedied. 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.' You must not think for a moment, Lucy, that it is right for you to let your spirit run away with your health. Here is another saying quite as good as your own: 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"

"I know, papa; but this is only for a trial. If I find my health failing under so many tasks, I will give up one school, at least. And there was not the slightest need of changing the breakfast hour. I could easily have prepared my own and Nan's."

"There is another thing," said Mrs. Rathbone. "I didn't like to speak about it before, but now we are started, I might as well. I don't approve of your going down into that horrid quarter of the town, searching for that little boy's home. No one knows what terrible accident might befall you there, nor what diseases you might catch."

"Poor Teddy! I fear it is a hopeless task, and that I will never find him."

"Say, Miss Dallis," interrupted Charlie, "don't you know Lucy started in to provide suits of clothes for all

those kids? I offered her my cane for one, so that he he might be in style."

"And I proposed giving Jimmie my gold watch," said Lawrence.

Lucy was used to this style of raillery, and had become so inured to it that she did not mind it. To Nan, used to the sympathy of all those at home in everything she undertook, it seemed strange. The whole controversy had to do with nothing at all save a new mission school. Clyde's and two others had proved such successes, that the church had decided to start still another, in the west end of the town, not many blocks from Lucy's home. With others, she had been asked to assist in its establishment. Nearly all the week, she and Nan had been out canvassing for scholars; and the former had appeared so wearied at the end of her labors, that her parents had been obliged to warn her that she was tasking her strength far beyond its endurance. Lucy rather agreed with them, but not being blessed with meekness, she hated to give in at once.

That day, which was to be the last of Nan's visit, the morning was spent in visiting the new school and in attending church. Then came the home school, Lucy teaching her girls, and Nan "substituting" in the infant class. For the first time in months Laura remained for Sunday-school. That she wanted to catch another glimpse of Nan, was her reason. She usually found herself too wearied after the week's work to take in more than the church service on Sundays. In the afternoon,

the three girls went down to Clyde's mission. How Nan enjoyed that !

"Isn't that grand?" she whispered to Mr. Morrison, when the children's voices rang out in their favorite: "When the Lord to Bethany Came." "They sing as if they comprehended every word, and rejoiced in it as well. What influence these hymns alone will have on their lives none can tell."

The young minister and Nan were as well acquainted as if they had lived next door to each other for years. Clyde had introduced them, and Dick had come out of his seclusion sufficiently to resume his old intercourse with the Rathbones. Meeting Laura to-day seemed but another link to the chain drawing him back to his friends and happiness. He felt exceedingly grateful to Nan, regarding her as the prime agent in the transformation.

"Isn't it horrid?" exclaimed Lucy, on their way home. "Nan goes home to-morrow. I'll miss her awfully. You can't imagine how nice it is to have a friend always near to tell things to and get her sympathy."

"What is the matter with me?" asked Clyde, hearing but a part of the complaint, as he stepped up at this juncture. "I thought we were pretty good friends by this time."

"So we are," returned Lucy. "But how could anybody make up for Nan?"

"You had better try me," he said. "Maybe I would do better than you think."

“You are well enough in your place,” she retorted, as she smiled pleasantly on him, “but your place isn’t Nan’s.”

In the evening they all attended the young people’s meeting, and afterward church. It had been a long, busy day.

“You can’t keep this up every Sunday,” said Nan, as they sat talking and brushing their hair before going to bed that night, exchanging those confidences and indulging in that pleasant talk that all girls love so well.

“Why not? Are you going to join the opposition too? I seem to be pretty well, don’t I? I am inclined to think that it agrees with me. Give me a reason for your opinion.”

“You aren’t strong enough, for one reason,” was the answer. “You may and do seem well enough, but the continuous strain, you will find, will undermine your health if you are not careful. I couldn’t stand it myself, and I am much more used to such work than you, Lucy.”

“Well, I know it,” assented her friend. “But now, honestly, Nan, do you think it would be right for me to do any less?”

“Certainly. You must remember, my dear, that your body is not your own. It belongs to him who bought you. Oughtn’t you to take the best of care of it?”

Lucy nodded her head. Nan was just the sort of person to make such matters clear.

“One reason, you said. Have you another, Miss Prudence?”

“Well, that one is sufficient; but I have another, if you want it. In the multiplicity of work the quality is apt to suffer. ‘The little farm well tilled,’ you remember, my dear. Many irons fail in the fire because there are too many of them. Have I preached enough?”

“Well, it is good sense if you have, and I’ll take heed to my ways.”

After this, Lucy contented herself with teaching in two Sunday-schools, much to her parents’ approbation. Nan’s visit brought forth more good results than she could even have imagined, much less foretold.

CHAPTER XIX.

DR. THORNE VISITS JOHN.

You must desire first to become *good*. That is the first and great end of life. That is what God sent you into the world for.—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

THEY missed Nan immensely at Fern Ridge. Jennie Lacy and John, aided by Dr. and Mrs. Dallas, did the best they could to take her place, but somehow something seemed lacking. They were glad when they received a letter from her, saying she would surely be at home the following week.

Nan was to be at home on Tuesday. On Monday, John Dale received a visitor. He was sitting in his little office, looking over his accounts, when a form darkened the doorway. Looking up, he perceived the manly features and frame of Dr. Thorne.

“How are you getting along, Dale?” said the doctor, as the men shook hands.

“Splendidly. How are you?”

“Well, I wasn’t feeling at my best; so I thought I’d knock off work for a bit, and take a week’s holiday. On Wednesday I must return.”

“I’m glad you chose Fern Ridge to spend your vacation in. You’re a man I’m always more than happy to see.”

"Thanks. That's the way I feel toward yourself, Dale."

One of John's rare, brilliant smiles passed over his generally sober face.

"I call you my 'life-preserver,' doctor," he said.

"I'm not sure that I did entirely right in that matter," observed the other.

"What could have been wrong?" asked John.

"Perhaps I ought not to have told a lie to save you. It *was* a sort of lie, you know."

"Grant that it was even so. God turned you into an instrument for good, and here is the result."

It was not a wrong feeling of pride that animated John Dale, as he drew himself up to his full height, and looked at his friend. Any one who has become a respectable citizen after being rescued from the gutter, will understand his thoughts as he spoke. The doctor knew what he meant.

"Say, Dale," said the latter, suddenly, "I've looked more into that subject we were talking of the last time I saw you. I think I see my way clearly a little."

A hearty hand-clasp was John's answer.

After John had finished his office work, the two men went out together. They stopped at the Dallases', who were more than glad to become acquainted with one of whom they had heard so much, but had never before seen. It was seldom the doctor took a holiday. As a rule, they are rare with physicians.

"Stay over a day, won't you, Dr. Thorne?" asked

Mrs. Dallas. "I would like to have Nan meet you. She will be home to-morrow."

"Of course I'll stay. You don't imagine I came so many miles to see my friend Dale, just to gallop off again the same day? No. I remain over until to-morrow evening's train."

Thus Nan had a chance to meet one of her heroes. After hearing John Dale's story, she had put Dr. Thorne upon her list of great men. She was a profound hero worshiper.

Mrs. Dallas had invited the doctor to dine with the family on Saturday. John, of course, was included in the invitation. When the young men arrived, Nan, arrayed in her best white gown, was in the parlor to receive them, while her mother gave the one servant some advice about dinner details.

"This is Dr. Thorne," said John. "And, doctor, this is Miss Dallas."

Nan held out her hand, and was just going to give voice to the usual polite formula, when her face suddenly became flushed with a rich color. John couldn't imagine what was the matter. After the first puzzled look, the doctor began to understand. He had a good memory for faces.

"I think Miss Dallas and I have met before," he said, quietly, though an amused smile lingered about the corners of his moustache.

Nan could not help laughing, in spite of her embarrassment.

"I think we have," she answered. "We hardly need shake hands this time, do we?"

Then they told John about it. You have doubtless at once surmised that the doctor was, as Clyde Desmond had fancied, the hero of Nan's street car adventure. He was thus invested with a double interest, as John Dale's rescuer, and as the guardian of the little boy with the "reminiscent" face.

"Who was that little boy you had with you?" asked Nan. "I was so interested in him."

"My latest," Clyde calls him," answered the doctor, giving a brief outline of the little fellow's history, and how he had come across him. As he spoke, Nan was turning something over and over in her mind. When the doctor paused, she spoke:

"Do you know, until now, I couldn't fancy who it was your little boy reminded me of?"

"Well! And now?"

"It is John—John Dale. Those eyes—that expressive mouth, sad, yet strong? Don't you see them, doctor, before you?"

John was interested in a moment. The Fern Ridge people had never seen a man so fond of little boys as he. He knew himself why he had always had this propensity for tiny lads. In every one he saw his own long-ago lost little brother. And now——

"Doctor," he exclaimed, "what is the lad's name?"

The doctor understood his friend's excitement, and answered at once:

"It is Teddy—Teddy Daly."

"Not the same," said Nan. "And, John, I'm so sorry. I hoped it was——. I know what you fancied."

"But, say, doctor, weren't you mistaken? Daly? Why not Dale? And Edward could easily be changed into Teddy. My step-father hated nicknames, so mother always called the baby by his full name. I *must* see that boy, doctor."

"You shall, John, as soon as it can be accomplished."

So, after dinner—a dinner whose conversation was enlivened by all manner of conjectures about the doctor's protégé—they all adjourned to the Fern Ridge telegraph office, and the doctor sent off this message to his house-keeper :

"Send Teddy to Fern Ridge to-morrow morning, in James' charge." James was the doctor's colored coachman.

About midnight the answer was brought to the doctor, who was spending the night with John Dale.

"Teddy Daly ran away this A. M. Cannot be found."

"So near and yet so far," was the doctor's unspoken thought.

"He *must* be found!" cried John. "I feel sure he is my brother."

CHAPTER XX.

TEDDY'S FLIGHT.

I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.

—J. G. WHITTIER.

CIVILIZATION is irksome to the untamed *gamin*. It was very nice indeed to Teddy, at first, the toothsome dainties the doctor provided for his hitherto unpampered palate, and the clean white bed he could rest in at night. He also enjoyed the little trips here and there throughout the city upon which the doctor took him. For a week he luxuriated; the second week he took it as a matter of course; the third week it became irksome; and after that positively unbearable. During the doctor's absence from the city, the little fellow found four walls, even when covered by pictures, something like a prison. He took matters into his own hands, and without saying good-bye to the housekeeper, ran away.

How happy he felt as he rapidly made his way toward the southern portion of the city! Like a linnet recently captured and then let loose from his cage, he merrily whistled a popular ditty, and, with his hands in his trou-

sers' pockets, felt that Teddy was himself again. He met a lad with whom he had formerly been upon the most friendly terms. The latter greeted him with a stare, and—"Who's a dude now?"

You see Teddy was wearing the new suit the doctor had given him. The housekeeper having thrown his old clothes away, he naturally had no choice but to retain these when he took his hasty departure from that hospitable mansion.

"I ain't no dude. Say it again, and I'll show yer."

It is needless to say the other boy said it again, and the "showing yer" began.

In the last stage of the street fight, Teddy was found on top, but a sad remnant of the well-dressed boy his adversary had ridiculed. Not to mention his battered countenance, his clothes looked as if a cyclone had passed over them. No more could he be styled a "dude." The other was satisfied. The two shook hands and were friends again.

Teddy again took up the old street life. He had some money the doctor had given him. With it he felt like a bloated capitalist; and not until he was down to his last nickel did he think of returning to work. With another lad of his own age, he began to sell newspapers. They were partners; but even with this advantage they found it difficult to make a comfortable living. Perhaps once in a while Teddy regretted having run away. He never said so, either now or afterward; but upon rainy mornings, especially, such a feeling would have been

natural. And then there were times when the chill winds gave him more than a reminder of what he had lost. His stomach too was not always by any means satisfied with its fare, and it added its protest to that of the wind and damp. We may be sure Dr. Thorne's comfortable home was sometimes regretted by Teddy.

In the meantime, the doctor prosecuted his search. John could not get away from his mining work, but he knew the doctor would do his best. They had so little to work from, not even being sure of Teddy's right name. "I think he said Daly," said the doctor. "But I may easily have been mistaken." When Clyde told Lucy about it, she was sure her Teddy and the doctor's were one and the same, their descriptions tallied so perfectly.

"But then," objected Clyde, "you know Teddy is far from being an uncommon name. And blue eyes are to be found everywhere."

"I know," assented Lucy. "I wish Dr. Thorne would come to the mission some Sunday and talk to Jimmie McCloud. He might be able to get information from him that I can't."

"I'll ask him. Now that he has met Miss Dallas, there is no reason why he should object to adding Miss Rathbone to his list of acquaintances."

Apparently he had none; for the following Sunday the doctor appeared at the mission, was introduced to Lucy, and by her to Jimmie McCloud. Dr. Thorne did not have much success in extracting information from Jimmie.

"I hain't seen Teddy since one Sunday he came here and peeked in, but wouldn't go upstairs. He didn't want to come no more. Miss Rathbone said we was to wash our faces, an' he never liked to wash his. No, I don't live round here no more. We moved up town about two weeks ago. O'Brien's aunt don't live here no longer, either."

That was all. Teddy might be in Timbuctoo for all Jimmie knew of his whereabouts. The doctor was made pretty sure, however, of the fact that his Teddy and Lucy's had the same identity. The former had told him he was running away from Sunday-school when he ran into himself with such a bump.

The question now was, to find the boy.

"Put an advertisement in the paper," said Lucy.

"A capital idea," answered Clyde. "But, can the little fellow read?"

"After a fashion," was the doctor's reply. "He has been a newsboy, off and on."

"Do you think he will be likely to see it?"

"Yes, I think so."

"In what papers would you put the notice?"

"I would try the 'Examiner' and the 'Call,' and perhaps one or two others."

"Well, I will. And perhaps, Lucy, you will get your father to act as our agent, and have the boy call at the bank."

That is how, when Teddy was selling the morning edition, two days following the above conversation, his chum

drew his attention to something in the column of "Personals."

"Here you are in an 'ad,' Ted," he said. "P'raps yer rich uncle has died, and left yer a million."

"Lemme see." Teddy drew the paper toward him. He looked at it for a second, and then said :

"Say, O'Brien, you read it. My eyes ache some to-day, and I forgot my specs."

A broad grin overspread O'Brien's face, but he complied with Teddy's wishes.

"'Teddy Daly will hear of something to his advantage by communicating with L. Rathbone, No. — Pine Street, this city.'"

"That ain't me."

"Why ! Ain't your name Teddy Daly ?"

"No. I ain't no Paddy."

If O'Brien had not been a good-natured youth, he would have resented this slur upon his birth. As it was, in consideration of their long friendship, he refrained from taking notice of the remark.

"What is your name ?" he asked.

"C'rectly, an' 'cordin' to law, it's Edward Dale. No Daly about it, an' I only lets people call me Teddy 'cause it's short, an' no nonsense in it."

"Say, little feller, yer talk mighty big fer a lad of yer size. How old are yer ?"

"'Leven, next birthday."

"Now, Ted, I'm nearly twelve, yer know, an' old enough to advise yer for yer good. Yer just go an' see

that there cove this afternoon. I'll bet that 'ad' was meant for a feller about your own size. P'raps the feller 'll give yer a dollar, anyway, like the pretty lady did; an' then we can go on a bender."

With the memories of his late taste of refining life, Teddy was loth to follow his companion's advice. The only concession he could be induced to make was: "P'raps I may look in there to-morrow. I'll see about it."

CHAPTER XXI.

IN MR. RATHBONE'S SANCTUM.

Nothing shows so narrow and small a mind as the love of riches; nothing is more honorable than to despise money, if you have it not; if you have it, to expend it for purposes of benevolence and generosity.—CICERO.

BEGINNING on Monday morning until Saturday noon of the same week, Lucy Rathbone's father reveled in an atmosphere of gold and silver, coupons and bonds. He was always revolving schemes in his head as to how he could add to his already large fortune. Upon the morning after the O'Brien had drawn Teddy's attention to that advertisement in the paper, Mr. Rathbone had received a visit and a communication that had upset him considerably. It is all very well to be the father of a pretty daughter, but extremely unpleasant when one is visited at his office by a suitor for said daughter. Especially is it disagreeable to one's feelings when the suitor is by you considered exceedingly unsuitable. With Lucy and Clyde it had been a case of mutual interest, if not love, at first sight. Clyde had not discovered the state of his feelings for some time. When he did so, however, he would have, like Viola, "let concealment prey upon his damask cheek," before he would have told his love, remembering his precarious income

and Lucy's position in life. But one cannot always depend upon one's self-control in such matters. Clyde felt that he really must try his chance with the dear girl. Having an old-fashioned sense of the duty of children and parents, he called first upon Mr. Rathbone, to "declare his intentions" and gain his consent.

The banker's greeting was most cordial *before* he heard the young man's errand. Clyde had always been one of his favorites among the list of family callers. To the artist's modest request, which surprised him to the last degree, he assumed his most freezing manner, and answered: "It cannot be." Though he talked a good deal more after that, it all amounted to the same thing—a decided negative.

Desmond went away quite dejected. If he had only made sure of the young woman's answer first, they might have done the "Young Lochinvar" act. Now, he would never know whether she loved him; for his honor forbade him to ask. He went home and painted away desperately at a portrait of Laura Macy he was doing for Mr. Murdock. His work put life into him. After all, he was young and she was younger. In time the stern parent might relent.

You may understand that the banker was not in the pleasantest mood when Teddy Daly saw fit to walk down Pine Street, and inside the door of the bank, inquiring for Mr. Rathbone.

"A special interview is requested," said the smiling clerk who carried Teddy's message to the private office.



How the Gardens Grew.

"Who is it?" asked Mr. Rathbone, a vision rising before him of another penniless suitor, whose presumption he must nip in the bud.

"A little boy, who says he wishes to see you in regard to an advertisement in yesterday's paper."

"Oh, the advertisement!" Mr. Rathbone looked annoyed. It was only at Lucy's earnest solicitation that he had allowed his name and address to appear in the newspaper notice. He had not fancied for an instant that anybody would answer it, and his bad humor was consequently not improved in the least.

"Show him in," he said to the clerk, and Teddy entered. Such a subdued, sober Teddy! Quite unlike O'Brien's saucy chum of yesterday. A bank generally impresses one's littleness upon him.

"Is your name Teddy Daly?" asked Mr. Rathbone.

"Some folks calls me that."

"But is it your name?" The banker disliked any approach to trifling.

"Not eggsactly," returned Teddy. He believed with the novelist, that "to give information is always indiscreet, but superfluous information is a crowning indiscretion," which he must by no means commit.

"Well, what is it?" Mr. Rathbone was growing impatient. What a foolish action he had committed when he put his name to that advertisement!

"I ain't goin' ter tell yer, unless yer lets me know why yer wants the information," replied the boy. He did not much fancy the looks of the banker. Dr. Thorne

was the only "nob" Teddy had fraternized with for at least three years. That brief experience with Miss Rathbone did not count.

"I don't know myself, but I guess it will be something good for you. I've no doubt nice clothes and a home are at the bottom of it. It is a boy named Edward Dale my friend is looking for. Some one said, by advertising for one Teddy Daly, the other might be found. So please tell me at once what you know."

Teddy chuckled in his sleeve. They would never find Edward Dale, if he had anything to say about it. He had tasted all he wished of the sweets called nice homes and clothes. Rags and liberty were his preference. Therefore he gave only ambiguous answers to all the banker's questions. It is true these were not of the most searching nature, nor did Mr. Rathbone understand in the least how to address a lad of Teddy's calibre. As a detective, or a student of boy character, Lucy's father would never have gained a prize. Besides, he grudged the time given to this affair, and considered that two trying interviews in one morning were a little too much.

He finally, inwardly denominating the street lad a bare-faced liar or an undoubted fool, acknowledged his failure in this case.

"Here," he said, handing Teddy a quarter--Lawrence and Charlie had initiated him into this mode of pacifying human bipeds of the schoolboy species--"you aren't the boy, I see. If you ever hear anything definite regarding such a person, take your news to this address."

He handed Teddy Dr. Thorne's address, thereby, if he had only known, thwarting any chance of the scheme's success. Mr. Rathbone was in complete ignorance of the fact that Teddy had been a resident of the doctor's home for some weeks, and had run away therefrom. All he understood was that John Dale was prosecuting his search for a long-lost brother, and that one Teddy Daly was suspected to know the child's whereabouts. Lucy had persuaded her father to be the one to question the boy, being confident that the name of a perfect stranger might draw the lad to confide in him sooner than that of a better known person.

"Yes, sir," answered Teddy, accepting the quarter with alacrity. "Thanks."

"I suppose you will go to work and double that in the course of the day," suggested the banker, rising to open the office door for the departing guest.

"No, siree-Bob," returned the lad, surprised at such a suggestion. "Me'n O'Brien 'll have a spread outer that. We believe in gettin' the good of our money while we has it, not savin' it up for our old age, nor doublin' it like a swell capitalist. Good-bye."

That evening, at the dinner table, Mr. Rathbone told his family about the boy and his conversation with him. He did not mention the other visitor he had received, nor the purport of his visit.

"This Teddy seemed a bright little lad, in some respects," he said, "but totally lacking in others. He had no idea of the value of money."

“Do you call that lacking in a sense?” inquired Lucy. “Perhaps he never had any to know the value of.”

“I gave him a small tip, with which he proposes to give himself and ‘O’Brien’ a ‘spread,’ ” answered her father.

“O’Brien? Did he say Jerry O’Brien? I just believe it was my Teddy, after all. He said some such funny things when I asked him questions,” observed Lucy. “And he lived once with a boy named O’Brien.”

“He didn’t mention his chum’s Christian name,” said Mr. Rathbone, while Lawrence contributed his quota to the subject.

“I bet this fellow was the boy who lived with Dr. Thorne. He was awfully slangy, and looked like the one papa described.”

“Then he could hardly be John Dale’s brother,” observed Mrs. Rathbone. “Because Clyde assures me that John Dale comes of a good family, and except for falling under that terrible habit’s influences, he was always a gentleman. Evidently, this lad has never been under any refining influences, else he would not use such peculiar language.”

“Oh, mamma,” explained Lucy, while the boys looked at their mother, to see if she had not been uttering sarcasm, “just think of the slang Lawrence and Charlie use, and imagine what they would be, did they not have you and papa to keep them a little bit straight.”

“But this boy’s grammar is off too,” said Charlie.

“We have no proof that he has ever had any school-

ing. His mother died when he was only seven, Dr. Thorne told me, and poor Teddy earned his own living after that."

"I wish Clyde would come in," said Lucy. "He could give us points on how to go to work in this discovery. I'm afraid Teddy never will turn up now, since you let him know that Dr. Thorne was interested in this search, papa."

Mr. Rathbone did not second the motion regarding Clyde, but he eyed his daughter more closely than usual. Seemingly, the look satisfied him and laid his suspicions at rest. Lucy spoke of the artist as if he was a friend or a brother; nothing more. However, he considered it safer to draw the subject back to the boy yclept Daly.

"This child appears to have a decided distaste for civilization," he observed.

"That is just the way it always is," said his wife. "The lower classes don't care to be raised. No one seems to go to work in the right manner to convert them."

"Like the blind man who received a tract upon 'Per-nicious Literature,' and the lame man who had one upon 'The Evils of Dancing.' One ought to examine the subject intelligently before trying to reach the masses." This was from Lucy.

"I don't know what to think about it," said Mr. Rathbone. "Some say, give the poor education; some say, give them money. But I think they ought to earn their own money, and then educate their children."

“To spend it,” added Charlie.

“That’s what you think you’re going to do,” answered his father. “For my part, remembering the philosophy of my boyish visitor this morning, I begin to think one had better spend his money himself, and get some of the good out of it. There is no knowing whether we shall live to need it in our old age. If we give it away, as you say, we are liable to make great mistakes in the way in which we bestow it.”

“How about laying up treasures in heaven?” asked Lucy.

That was bringing the question within too narrow a compass. The family changed the subject.

CHAPTER XXII.

LAURA'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Better trust all and be deceived,
And weep that trust and that deceiving,
Than doubt one heart which, if believed,
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

—FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

LAURA'S health began to give way under the system of work she had planned for herself. Her nature was so sympathetic that every child's woes she made her own. She visited all her charges at their homes, helped to find better paid work for many of the fathers and mothers who supported the families, and busied herself in everything that could add to their good, material and spiritual. Finally, she grew so thin and pale that Mr. Murdock was alarmed, and called in a physician to take a look at his ward. The learned man evidently understood his duty; for Laura found a substitute for her class, and was packed off to "Craggs" to recuperate, a dear old lady friend of Mr. Murdock's acting as companion.

Laura had not in the meantime forgotten to impart to her guardian her discoveries in regard to John Walton—Dale. Mr. Murdock said he would investigate; but he was a slow man, believed in doing things leisurely, and besides, considered that there was no immediate danger

of John Dale's departing from their ken. Laura had been domesticated at "Craggs" for a week before her guardian thought to bestir himself in the matter. Then he wrote:

"Dick Morrison is going to take a vacation, and thinks of spending it at Fern Ridge. Why not have him make the inquiries you wish? I am coming to lunch with you to-morrow, and will bring Dick with me. You can by then decide how much you had better tell him of the story. I thought you would prefer his aid to giving the particulars to another detective."

This letter gave Laura much to think over. It seemed as vague as a dream, that period when she had been the Reverend Richard Morrison's right hand. From what she had seen during Nan's visit at Lucy's, the clergyman's daughter had slipped easily into her former place. Then Mr. Morrison purposed spending his holiday at Fern Ridge. There could be no doubt that Nan was the attraction. Well, it was all right. How foolish she had been to trouble herself about a bit of gossip. She had not believed for a minute what Mrs. Lewis had hinted in regard to Morrison's wooing her fortune. Why need she have cared what they said about the reason for her own attraction for church work? She knew now that it was untrue. She loved her kindergarten labor for itself, and the other was not so dissimilar. Yes, let him come. She was sure of herself, and sure she had not mistaken his feelings in regard to Nan. He would find John Walton for her, and she would be an heiress no longer.

They came. It was such a pleasant day for them all.

Mr. Murdock talked to his old friend, Laura's companion, and Richard with Laura herself. They had so much in common to talk about, these two young people. They chatted on about their several protégés, until the time came for Laura to tell her companion the service she required of him. She thought it best to explain unreservedly her reasons for finding John Walton's heir or heirs, and connecting John Dale with the former.

"It is odd, is it not?" questioned the young man, when she had finished. "You are looking for an heir, and Dale is looking for a brother."

Laura had not heard about it; but when Morrison had explained, and mentioned the little boy's name, she said:

"It appears to me that I have heard the name before. He chummed with a boy named Jerry O'Brien, you say? Jerry's sister is one of my pet pupils."

"Then you may be the means of giving to Dale, if not a fortune, a brother."

"I may come to see you when I return from Fern Ridge?" asked Richard, when Mr. Murdock and he were bidding good-bye to the two ladies. "You will be anxious to know at once if Dale is he whom you seek."

"Of course you must come," answered Laura. To herself she added: "And let me know of yours and Nan's happiness." She hardly understood why the thought should give her such a dull pain in her heart.

It was Christmas Day when Morrison came to redeem his promise. Laura had just mounted her horse and was

going for a long, solitary ride over the hills. There was no need of a groom's attendance at "Craggs."

"Don't dismount," said Morrison. "You have another horse, have you not? Let me accompany you."

Ned, who was in hailing distance, was called, and speedily had the steed ready for the minister to mount.

The two rode along slowly for a little way, that conversation might be rendered possible.

"Did you find him?"

"Yes. There is no doubt that the son of your father's friend is John Dale. I questioned him carefully. Every circumstance in both his parents' lives tallies with those you previously discovered."

"Did you tell him?"

"Not all. Only that he would learn something to his advantage by communicating with Mr. Murdock."

"Will he do so?"

"He will be in town as soon as he can make arrangements to leave his affairs at Fern Ridge."

"How kind you were to see to it all. I should never have remembered those details."

"It was nothing. By the way, did you lay your hands on Teddy yet?"

"No, he has disappeared. Jerry hasn't seen him for days."

"How disappointing! I was thinking so much of what the find would be to Dale."

Laura started her horse into a gallop, and both riders were silent for the necessary space in which it took their

steeds to settle down again. Laura wondered why the other did not tell her of his engagement. He must know she would be interested to hear about Nan. She resolved to stir up his confidences at the first opportunity. As for Richard, he had fallen into a serious mood, and did not feel in the least like conversing. How provoking, that those horses would stick so close to each other! They must have been used to going in harness. This very thought, which struck them both at the same time, gave Laura the opening she wished.

“Isn't it romantic, the way these beasts act?” she said. “I never noticed it before.”

“They are carriage horses, are they not?” asked Morrison.

“They must have been once,” she returned, “though we only use them for riding.”

“They would go well together, I think.”

“Yes,” was all she could find to say.

It seemed to Morrison that his opportunity had come. He conquered his timidity by a desperate effort.

“Could we go together, Laura?” he asked, reining his steed in as near the other as he dared. “I wish we could always go in this way, side by side. I love you, Laura!”

There! It was out, in spite of his timidity.

Laura looked up at him. He was just a little higher, on horseback, than herself. Her brilliant eyes expressed a glad surprise.

“Love me?” she said. “Why, I thought it was Nan.”

"Nan? Miss Dallas? We have never been anything but friends. But you—why, I loved you when I first saw you. You were reading an essay. Don't you remember?"

"Yes, and Lucy thought Mr. Desmond the handsomer of the two men who came late."

"Did you too?" Dick was not full of vanity, but any man likes to hear the opinion of the girl he loves regarding first impressions.

Laura blushed.

"No. I told Lucy I was going to join her church, because I liked young ministers,"

"Do you? I wish you would love *one*, instead," said Morrison.

Her answer was spoken quite softly, but it seemed to satisfy him.

As they turned their horses homeward, Laura said:

"I am so sorry to think I can't endow you with my wealth. A man like you could do no end of good with it."

"You need not give it up if you don't wish. Dale doesn't know."

She looked at him almost fiercely. Then her face softened as she saw the smile on his.

"You couldn't mean it. You haven't a mean thought, I know."

"Dearest, you are more than a fortune to me. It is for you I regret the lost luxuries."

"Nonsense. Your love is more than any luxury to

me. And John Walton—I can't call him John Dale any more—is sure to put the money to the best use."

As he said good-bye that night, Morrison exclaimed, fervently:

"Thank God for my Christmas gift."

"Thank God for mine," added Laura.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT FERN RIDGE.

If little labor, little are our gains,
Man's fortunes are according to his pains.

—HERRICK.

TEDDY did not appear at Dr. Thorne's, so word of failure had to be sent to those waiting for tidings at Fern Ridge. John did not give up, either in his prayers or in his hopes. Nan was still sanguine.

"The farther away he tries to keep himself, the surer I am that we shall find him," she said to John. "And with that face, I am sure he is your own little brother."

John could not help partaking of her faith, especially since all his own hopes pointed in the same direction. There was something very sweet to him in the thought that Nan Dallas was as much interested in finding his little brother as he was himself. All along his upward climb the Dallas family had been his encouragers, and Nan had raised his thoughts higher than all. She had led him on to study books that he had considered beyond his reach; she had opened his mind to the most beautiful truths; and she had shown him how to the beloved of the Lord nothing is impossible. He never thought for an instant to what these lessons might tend. If he had, he might have gone away at once. Not that he was one of

those empty-headed coxcombs who fancy that every girl who looks at them twice is in love with them; no, but Dale was too honorable to wish to link his life, with its horrible past, to that of any pure girl. He loved Nan, but she must never know it. In truth, Nan thought of him as a dear brother, nothing more.

It drew near to Christmas time. Nan, her mother, and Jennie Lacy were all busy getting presents ready for the Christmas trees at the kindergarten and the Sunday-schools. John drilled the star pupils in the music and elocution classes. They intended having a splendid Christmas festival. Every heart felt the pure joy that should always be present at this hallowed season. A few days before this entertainment was to take place, John received a letter from Clyde Desmond. The latter wrote: "We need you, my dear John, to personate Santa Claus at our mission festival. Will you come? You're just the man for us, and the little change to town air will do you good."

John presented the matter for Nan's consideration. She thought he ought not to hesitate for a moment.

"Go, by all means," she said. "You know their festival does not take place until two days after Christmas, and ours is the day before. And I tell you what to do when you return. Bring Dr. Thorne back with you, to stay over New Year's."

Nan and the society-hating physician had become great friends, with Uncle Sam as the medium of no end of interesting chat between the two so dissimilar.

Dick Morrison came up to spend his holidays at Fern

Ridge, and accomplished the errand put upon him by Mr. Murdock and Laura. Dale's presence in town thus seemed in the light of a necessity.

John decided to go. "Who knows?" said Mrs. Dallas; "you may be able to find that little boy, yourself." Perhaps that was one reason why John was so easily persuaded to leave the Fern Ridge people for a brief space, even without his promise to the minister.

Before the grand entertainment came off, Tom, Dick, and Harry Dallas called upon John one day in his office, seemingly brimful of a grand secret. He was the only one of whom they made a confidant. Upon Christmas morning, among the many gifts received by Mrs. Dallas, was a large paper parcel, tied with white baby ribbon. With the eyes of all the family fixed upon her—only three of the circle knowing the parcel's contents—she opened it. It was a long scroll of parchment, rolled and tied with a blue ribbon, a number of verses in silver, Old English lettering, appearing upon its face.

"Such a pretty idea!" exclaimed Nan. "Whose is it?"

"From Tom, Dick, and Harry. A merry Christmas," read their mother, from a card enclosed.

The boys could keep in no longer. "Read the verses, mamma!" they cried, excitedly. "John Dale did the lettering, but we made the poetry."

The fond and proud mother complied, and here they are. Those who dislike amateur efforts, may skip, and go on to the next chapter.

THE CHRISTMAS TIME.

BY TOM, DICK, AND HARRY.

Christmas is the time of all the year,
When hearts should be happy and full of cheer.
For Christ was born on this blessed day—
He came to wash our sins away.

The streets are gay with Christmas greens,
And all around are happy scenes.
The wagons hurry through the street,
Filled with toys and things to eat.

The streets are lighted up so bright,
You would not know when it is night.
In the butcher's shop, a turkey big,
Is hung beside a fat, plump pig.

A toy-shop stands across the way,
'Tis always full, both night and day;
Dolls peep from the windows, great and small,
Everything else, from a top to a ball.

And passing from this brilliant store,
We see the church, with open door,
The bells are ringing—eight—nine—ten—
“On earth peace, good will to men.”

Out on the air the carols go,
Sounding sweet and soft and low,
Of angels filling the great blue sky,
Of shepherds keeping their flocks near by.

Many are coming to church to-night,
To hear the glorious words of light;
Of the Child who was in a manger born,
And the wise men, who came at earliest dawn.

It is Christmas eve, and the children, five,
Are merry and joyful, with fun are alive.
They hop off to bed, and hang up their stockings,
Ears open to listen for Santa Claus' knockings.

Christmas Day is here at last,
The Christmas dinner will soon be past.
We eat our fowl, and sauce so rare;
Pudding too, and pies, are there.

After dinner, to church we go—
Children with mamma; Jane with her beau.
The tree is large, and bright, and green,
And children's faces all serene.

Words of joy we all shall sing,
Thoughts of kindness shall we bring;
We'll clap our hands in great delight,
And long remember Christmas night.

The Christmas festival long will last—
Soon *our* Christmas will be past.
But Christmas east, or Christmas west,
Where peace and love are—*that* is best.

“O—h!” cried Bebe, drawing a long breath.
“Wasn't that beautiful, mamma? I say, read it again.
It's a lot nicer than ‘'Twas the Night Before Christmas’; and to think that Tom, Dick, and Harry did it all themselves!”

It was a long time before the boys lost their reputation at home and at school of being “sure enough” poets. Their father, perhaps, privately doubted their being great geniuses, but their mother believed in their powers forever after. How very nice it is to think there is always

somebody—be it a mother, a bosom friend, or a sister—who believes in our crudest efforts. Fathers and brothers have a habit of scoffing; but while we have the sympathy of the gentler sex, what reck their jeers?

After the Fern Ridge holiday festivities had lapsed into the past, John Dale started for the city.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TEDDY MEETS SANTA CLAUS.

“All things come to him who waits.”

MANY, many times had Teddy felt the gnawings of hunger since the day he and O'Brien had eaten up Mr. Rathbone's quarter. In the holiday season, people, as a rule, are so busy shopping that they cannot stop to buy a newspaper. O'Brien, being larger and a year older than Teddy, secured the most of the trade. Being partners, one would have thought this would have been an equal benefit; but, by-and-by, O'Brien began to think this rather a one-sided arrangement.

“You ain't earnin' nothin'," he said to Teddy.

This was the day after Christmas. That day had not meant much to the two lads. They had sold four papers; that was all, save that Jerry had dined at his aunt's in the afternoon. He had not been allowed to take a guest with him, else he might have invited Teddy to accompany him.

“Well, I can't do no better," returned the little lad, to the other's reproach.

“Then we'd better dissolve partnership. Joe Snipes is anxious to go in with me, an' he's got capital. S'posin' we 'grees ter part, Ted?"

"Jest as you say." Teddy made a bold attempt to look dignified; it was a dismal failure. One can't feign dignity when he is hungry and cold, unless his blood is entirely blue.

"Good-bye, O'Brien."

"Bye-bye, Ted. Here's your share of the tin." O'Brien held out a dime.

"I don't want it. Keep it yerself," said Teddy, walking off with his hands shoved down deep in his ragged pockets. How bravely he tried not to cry. But the tears would come; he was only ten years of age, remember, and his only friend had just deserted him. All that day he wandered about. He ran an errand for a baker, who gave him a couple of doughnuts and a piece of pie. After eating these he felt better, and enjoyed his long night's rest in a convenient doorway. The next day it rained, but he had no shelter to seek, so he followed his occupation of the former day, roaming about. In the course of his travels, about nightfall, he happened into the neighborhood of Clyde's mission school. The place was lighted up quite brilliantly; Teddy could not imagine the reason of the display.

"Hello, Ted! Where've you kep' yourself all this time?" A lad of his own age slapped him upon the back, with hearty, if somewhat rough greeting.

Teddy recognized Jimmie McCloud.

"What's going on in there?" he asked, pointing to the hall opposite.

Jimmie explained that they were to have a festival—

whatever that was—at the mission, with cakes and candy, and every child was to receive a present. Teddy had half a mind to accompany Jimmie when he heard this alluring announcement, but his ardor was dampened when his friend explained that no one was to have a gift who had not been there for at least two Sundays beforehand. “And to-night’s the festival,” concluded Jimmie. “Sorry for you, Teddy, but come next Sunday, won’t you? We’re going to have a picnic in the summer.” After announcing this entrancing bribe, he disappeared up the stairs of the mission school.

By-and by Teddy went across the street and stood close to the doorpost. A figure rushed by him and up the stairs, taking them two at a time. Teddy saw the door open, a hand outstretched, and heard the words, “At last! The children were becoming impatient.”

“For what?” Teddy wondered. His curiosity at last becoming overpowering, he ventured up the steps and peeped in at the door. A kindly looking young gentleman—Mr. Morrison, if Teddy had known—opened it wider, and, taking the little boy’s hand, said, “Come in! Come in.” Then Teddy was taken to a seat on one of the front benches, and there was Jimmie McCloud, “one vast, substantial smile,” as he made room for his friend by his side.

“How’d you get here?” he whispered.

“That man made me come in,” answered Teddy, pointing to the benevolent features of the Reverend Dick.

“That’s the minister,” explained Jimmie.

But who was that who now appeared upon the platform? A jolly old fellow enough, with his twinkling eyes, ruddy cheeks, and long, silvery beard.

“Santa Claus,” was Jimmie’s stage aside to his companion.

Then St. Nicholas’ counterpart took out his bundles, and called the children’s names, one by one. At last all had received presents save Teddy, who could hardly expect one under the conditions. All at once, the pretty lady who had been his teacher upon that memorable Sunday, went up and whispered something to the minister. Then the minister called up Mr. Desmond, and Lucy and the two men held a conference, seemingly very animated. In the meantime, Santa Claus distributed cakes, candy, apples, oranges, and nuts.

The conference of the three over, Mr. Morrison called Santa Claus to him, and they had a chat of some minutes. Then Santa Claus retired from the room, while Mr. Morrison stepped to the front of the platform saying: “I’m going to tell you all a nice story. Who wants to hear it?”

Numbers of hands, sticky and otherwise, were raised, among them Teddy’s. He was always fond of hearing stories. What boy is not?

“Well, once upon a time, there was a boy who left his parents and came to this city. He met with many adventures. That is the way Mr. Morrison began. He told incidents in John Dale’s life, then he branched

off and told about the little brother who was left behind in New York ; how he finally came also to this western country ; how he met Dr. Thorne, and how he finally ran away. Then he further told of the young man's search for the family he had left in the East, and how they had gone away, nobody knew where. Still he did not despair. He kept on praying, and trusting that he would at least find his little brother Edward.

"What do you suppose happened," concluded the minister. "That young man was asked by a friend in this city to come down from his country home and take part in an entertainment. At that very place, his lost brother was among the children. The queer part of it was, that neither knew the other.

"Children, what would you say if I told you that this is the very entertainment I am speaking of? And here is the young man—the story's hero," he added, as John Dale appeared, in the very doorway through which Santa Claus had disappeared.

"I must see the lad, now," said John, quietly.

"You shall have him in your arms, directly," answered the minister.

During this story, Teddy's eyes had never left the speaker's face. When he stopped, after that last question, and the young man entered, the lad could keep silent no longer. To Jimmie's unbounded surprise, he rose from his seat, and going toward the minister, exclaimed, "I'm that little boy you told about. My name is Edward Dale. Where's Jack?"

John Dale opened wide his arms "Here he is," he exclaimed. With those two faces, so much alike in spite of the difference in their years and conditions, no one could doubt the relationship. Besides, Teddy could tell John all about his father and mother and their former home in the East. No one else could know these facts, or have any interest in them. The fact was proved later on. Just now John Dale took Teddy as an answer to his earnest prayer. His heart was ready for the boy's coming. As for Teddy, he was this time ready for civilization, exemption from hunger and cold being too potent arguments, even with liberty and independence upon the opposite side.

Thus Teddy met the good old Christmas saint, and in him found a brother. No more lookings for a living that was hard to find, no more shiverings, and no more loss of food for Teddy Dale. One of the first things his brother gave him was a good supper.

"My," he said, as the warm room and the nourishing food made their influence felt. "My, that's good, Jack. I didn't expect anything like this a little while ago. It's just like a story."

"You've had a pretty hard time, haven't you, my boy?" was his brother's answer, as he looked tenderly on the little chap.

"Yes, and since my partnership busted I didn't just know how to make out."

"How was that?"

And then Teddy told him all about Jimmie O'Erien,

and the helpless condition he was in when he saw the lights of the mission school.

“Well, no more want now, my boy,” was the older brother’s comment, as he patted the boy’s head in a fatherly way.

“I got a present, after all,” observed Teddy to Jimmie McCloud that evening. “And I guess it was bigger’n, better’n yours—a brother!”

These words meant more to Teddy than he could well know.

CHAPTER XXV.

APPROACHING FRUITION.

Where there is much light,
There is much shade.

—GOETHE.

MORE was to come. The following evening, John was sitting in Dr. Thorne's office, with Teddy on his knee, and all the adventures of both were being re-tailed. Teddy's quaint phraseology made his doings more interesting than if related in dictionary terms. It is a mistake to fancy that grammar, like poetry, is inborn. Pronunciation must be learned before practice makes perfect. Even a peer of the realm could not spell correctly, were he not taught to do so, and then very frequently he might miss it.

"There was a lady I seen once," said Teddy, "who gave me a dollar. She asked me to come to Sunday-school, not the mission, but a big one, where the boys and girls wear nice clothes. I told her I didn't want, 'cause I knew how stiff they was. But she gave me the dollar, just the same."

The bell rang, and Mr. Morrison entered, accompanied by a lady. Espying the latter, "That's her," said Teddy.

"Who?" asked the others.

“The one that gave me the dollar.”

It was Laura Macy. She had come to tell John his good fortune. In the morning's interview with Mr. Murdock, even the most minute of the lawyer's scruples in regard to the identity of John Dale as Walton's son, had vanished.

“You had better think twice about giving him the whole of your father's property,” he advised Laura. “Walton's could not have been half of what it is worth now.”

“It must be all, or nothing,” said Laura. And Morrison concurred in his opinion.

At first, John couldn't believe it.

“I remember, now,” he said, “my father often said in his letters that my mother must keep her eyes open for ‘a gude time comin’.’ But when we heard of his death, mother felt that the end had come.”

“She married again.”

“Yes, she did. But I fancy she meant it as much for my good as for her own. He was Teddy's father.”

That last observation, they understood, they were to take as a palliation for the man's conduct toward his step-son.

“I was always a wild lad,” added John. “They said there was nothing good in me. My mother alone always loved me through everything. Yet I ran away.”

“Perhaps your soul was chastened by the trials you went through.”

“Indeed it has been. Alas! the scars remain.”

John was thinking of Nan. To most men, money glosses all errors. He did not look upon it in that light himself; but somehow, he began to hope that he might win her, some day.

"It is all yours," said Laura. He started, almost thinking her words an answer to his thoughts. Recollecting himself, he answered: "No, I cannot take it. You and Morrison know far better than I to what use to put such wealth."

"Read this," she returned. "Then answer."

She showed him her father's letter, and his resolution wavered.

"We must consult with Mr. Murdock," he said. "This is not a question one can decide at a moment's notice." With this Laura had to be satisfied, and she and Morrison took their leave.

After Teddy had been wafted into the arms of Morpheus, in the same pretty bedroom he had formerly occupied when a sojourner at the doctor's, John and his friend resumed their confidences.

"I can thoroughly believe in God's goodness," said the doctor. "And it is love that has wrought the transformation."

"Love?" John looked surprised.

"You wouldn't have suspected it, would you?" The doctor looked as if the notion was hardly familiar to himself. "She is such a dear creature, I couldn't help it. You know her well, Dale—Walton, I mean. Do you know, you are my only rival, I verily believe——"

John started, but the other did not notice it. "She says she loves you like a brother."

There was little doubt whom the doctor meant, but to make assurance doubly sure, John asked:

"Who is the fair lady of your choice?"

"Couldn't you guess? It is Miss Dallas. Poor creature that I am, I have not yet asked her."

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all,"—

quoted John.

"I know, but you see, old man, I'm not in the least sure of her feelings toward myself. We are the best of friends, but——well! We have been acquainted so little while."

"There is a plant called coreopsis, whose significance is 'love at first sight.'"

"What of it? I don't know but what it was my case—but hers? It could not have been, in that crowded car."

"Better try your luck, doctor. Go in and win. You have my blessing."

Seemingly the blessing was of value. For the doctor went up to Fern Ridge the next day, and upon his return went at once to John.

"You are the best adviser a man ever had," he said. "I took your advice, and she is mine. But say, John, I'm more than half inclined to be jealous, already. She

talked about you the whole time that I was there, and in *such* terms."

Knowing that to Thorne he owed a debt of gratitude, John could not grudge him the treasure he had won. He was glad he had never told Nan his love, and had thus spared her the pang of refusing one for whom she really felt a deep regard. One understands the comfort Teddy gave John now. The latter stayed in town long enough to settle up all business with Mr. Murdock regarding the Macy estate. Upon one point he was firm. He would accept but half of the large fortune offered.

"There has been sufficient atonement," he said. "Were my father and yours here, they would be satisfied. Not knowing we were rich, we never missed the money. My life would have been far more full of temptation had I possessed it."

The lawyer was satisfied, and Laura had to be. Perhaps she was glad at times, knowing how much wiser she had grown, and to how many good uses she and Dick could put her wealth.

Lucy did not get her pupil back, nor did the mission gain Teddy as an addition to its ranks. John took the lad to Fern Ridge, where Nan and everybody made so much of him that there was danger of his being spoiled.

"You can't spoil his grammar," said John, with a laugh. "But you may his theology."

Indeed, the terms Teddy had picked up in the street clung to him for a long time. Tom, Dick, and Harry added quite a number of new words to their vocabularies,

gleaned from the transplanted town youth. They liked him at once, and so did Bebe. Nan enjoyed watching the unfolding of his soul. For three years past the lad's teachings had been of the worst; but somehow, the influences of his first seven years, watched over by a conscientious mother, had kept him from growing entirely bad. Mischievous he was, truly; but all boys are that, more or less.

He was so happy with John. Dr. Thorne wrote up to the latter that he wanted Teddy to come and stay with him awhile. "I'll make a doctor of him," he explained. The little lad would not go, however, nor did John wish to part with him so soon. The older brother was meditating on a plan, which he did not at once make known.

In the meantime, Laura Macy became Mrs. Richard Morrison. Their wedding was a grand affair, in the First Church, with all the paraphernalia of bridesmaids, ushers, flowers, and favors. Laura had wished it to be so, when Dick, man like, had pleaded for a less public ceremony.

"There are so many people who never see weddings at all, that is, big "swell" affairs. I wish every poor creature I ever saw to enjoy the sight. Weddings *are* splendid things, Dick, dear, you know."

So they invited all their friends; and no end of remarks were made, of course.

"Everybody knew Laura Macy would do something odd," remarked Jean Douglas. "The whole thing was

managed about as curiously as one could fancy. Kindergarten kids in the best seats beyond the ribbon, and those old almshouse women of Mr. Morrison's in among the relatives. Horrid, I call it."

The young couple did not care, but serenely went their way. To the big reception came all their friends, young and old, rich and poor. Every one wished them "God speed" when they departed for "Craggs," where they would spend their honeymoon.

Lucy Rathbone was the maid of honor, and Dr. Thorne stood up with Morrison. Clyde had been asked to officiate in this capacity, but he would not, giving some laughing excuse. The fact was, he could not bear to be best man where Lucy was maid of honor.

"It brings the matter too near home," he explained, to himself.

His good time was coming, however. Mr. Rathbone's heart, not in reality a flinty one, had been much softened during the holiday season, and when these wedding preparations were going on. He noticed Lucy's pensive air as she busied herself in her household labors, and fancying he saw a change in her countenance from its usual bright appearance, he relented. Clyde was delicately shown that he might now venture where he had been told not to tread.

Clyde and Lucy had not been close comrades for some months. He knew the reason he stayed away from the Rathbones', or at most paid a formal call once a fortnight.

"Desmond ain't half the fun he used to be," sighed Charlie.

"An awful dig now," added his brother. "Working day and night on his old pictures."

Lucy, in silence, concurred with the boys. Mr. Rathbone waited for an avowal, and confided only to his wife. Desmond was timid in regard to attempting a renewal of the old friendship.

In the early summer, another wedding gave Clyde the chance he craved, of meeting Lucy and pleading his cause. In the early summer Nan was married to Dr. Thorne. Clyde and Lucy stood up with them.

"Look out," said the former. "Don't do it again. 'Thrice a bridesmaid, never a bride.'"

"I don't care. I never mean to marry," returned Lucy.

"No?" quizzed Clyde. It always was such a delight to tease Lucy Rathbone. "Case of blighted affection?"

"Not at all," indignantly. "I intend to devote my life to missionary work among the poor of our city."

"What of that? Aren't two heads better than one in such a task?—four hands, than two?"

"I suppose so," answered his companion, gravely. "So few men, though, care for that sort of thing."

"Who are the exceptions?"

"Well, Dr. Thorne, for one——"

"He's married," said Clyde, with mock gravity. "Too bad. He won't do for you."

"Nonsense! I wasn't thinking of that."

“How about John Walton?”

“He is a good man. And, by the way, why was he not here to-day?”

“He has gone East, to see about some property left to Teddy by an aunt.”

“I’m so sorry. Nan thought as much of him as if he had been her brother.”

“Very likely.” Clyde had surmised somewhat of the truth of the case, but he did not voice his fancies to his companion.

“See here, Lucy,” he said. “Haven’t I a missionary spirit?”

“I never thought about it—much,” she answered. “Why, yes! Of course you have.”

“Well, what’s the matter with me?”

“Nothing, as far as I can see. You look healthy enough.”

“I didn’t mean that. How would I do as a husband?”

“Very well—for Jennie Lacy. She is wild to be ‘engaged.’”

“Provoking creature!” exclaimed Clyde. “Why will you persist in misunderstanding my meaning? Will you marry me, Lucy Rathbone?”

Doubtless her answer was all he could have wished, for they looked very happy all the rest of the day. So did Mr. and Mrs. Rathbone, later on. “What if Clyde is an ‘ineligible?’” said the former, in reply to a remark of his wife, “I’d rather have Lucy herself again, than going about moping all the time.”

“I don’t think she ever was unhappy,” returned Mrs. Rathbone.

“I didn’t think it, I *knew* it,” answered her husband—a case on record where the down-trodden man had the last word.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BLOSSOMING TIME.

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns. I am thankful that thorns have roses.—ALPHONSE KARR.

NO, John did not appear at the wedding of Nan Dallas and Doctor Thorne. While he did not regret one whit of the latter's happiness, still he was human, and his heart was sore. Eastward he went, some weeks before the wedding, accompanied by his little brother, who had become so dear to him that he felt as though it would be wrong for them ever to be separated. The business that called him East having been settled, the two brothers went abroad. Dale, the elder, was Walton now. He considered it but right that he should assume his father's name, especially since through John Walton had come his fortune. Nan had no suspicion as to the reason of John's not being present at her marriage, nor had the doctor. The two had always been so fraternal in their relations, that only the searching eyes of Clyde, sharpened doubtless by the then hopelessness of his own suit, had penetrated John's secret.

Nan was delighted to hear that the best part of the "sandwich" was not to remain a "love-lorn female." Did you ever see a happy bride who considered others' lives complete unless on the road to Hymen's altar? In

after years, it may sometimes happen that she will say, shaking her head wisely, to such of her old friends as have chosen a maiden's lot :

"Well, dear, you don't know how thankful in many respects you should be that you didn't marry. You have had a much easier time, with more fun in it, by remaining single. You really can't conceive how many troubles a wife has to bear." But if she really loves her husband, be he good, bad, or indifferent, she will add : "Notwithstanding matrimony's drawbacks, I am *so* glad I married !"

Seeing that nearly every section laments a preponderance of women over men in the census, there must always be a certain number of single women. But a spinster's life, no matter how lovely, how full of joy and happiness it may be, seems not quite perfect. A well-laid garden, trim and neat, it still forever lacks the crowning point of luxuriant beauty. Even Miss Alcott, one of the sweetest "old maids" who ever lived, acknowledged this.

It was fully two years before John Walton and Edward Dale turned their steps homeward. They had traveled through all the countries of the Old World, and after showing Teddy some of the wonders of the New, John purposed placing "the youngster" at school, and settling himself down to the work he had mapped out.

That old thought of his, kept alive by Nan's encouraging words, to write something that would bring the eyes

of the world directly upon the evils that lay beneath its surface, evils of which he could write from his own knowledge, had grown upon him while abroad. During the two years of absence from his home—Fern Ridge he ever regarded as a home—he had not been idly “seeing the sights” like the ordinary tourist. No, he had looked deeply into everything, especially the moral life of the great cities, and he had *not* found, as many casual visitors to the Pacific Coast have averred, the California metropolis to be “the wickedest city in the world.” He knew that its newness and cosmopolitan population caused sin and vice ever to be uppermost where in older places it is glossed over or hidden entirely. Reforms already in progress would soon purge the evil atmosphere, and being young in sin as in its birth and growth, there was every reason to believe that in time no city would become more moral.

Dr. Thorne had given John letters to a number of great London men, journalists and reformers. These gave him many of the points he needed for his proposed work.

He wrote, and his articles were published in New York and in his own city. They excited much comment in the reading world. No people are more ready to give reformers an ear than Americans. The trouble is, we listen to so much advice without heeding what is of true value, that as a rule it practically amounts to nothing, or at least very little. But Walton’s words lived in many hearts, and he thanked God that he had been shown the

way to make his past experience and present wealth of the most value.

Before starting out upon his further contemplated work, and before putting Teddy at school, he visited his home. Fern Ridge had changed considerably, and continually for the better. Nan was no longer an inmate of the Dallas parsonage; as the doctor's wife, she presided over his city home. John and Teddy visited their friends in San Francisco, of course. When the former saw Nan, he felt that it was all right, "all for the best," he said to himself. She was in her proper place as the physician's wife, and what a continual help she was to her husband as a spiritual guide. To Lucy, now Mrs. Clyde Desmond, and already making plans for the future of the tiny babe nestling in her arms, Nan still acted as counselor.

"I ought to be the happiest of Telemaques," said the artist's wife, one day, with two such mentors as yourself and Clyde continually at my elbow."

Clyde's pocket was much fuller these days, as his fame grew apace. He might, indeed, have become a nabob had he desired, but with both hands he and Lucy dispensed benefits, and never ceased "lending to the Lord."

"They are quite as happy," observed Grandpapa Rathbone, one day, as he held the cooing Clyde, Jr., in his arms. "I begin to think I would have been a far happier man had I been as generous as Clyde and Lucy."

"Don't belie your good deeds, papa," deprecated his

daughter. "Clyde says you are making up for lost time nowadays."

The Reverend Richard Morrison was no longer assistant, but the pastor of his church. While generally ministers' wives are subject to the united criticisms of the entire congregation, which quite too frequently are of the adverse order, Laura was not treated to these. In the first place, she had been known to them all for many years, and in the second place, her oddities being all of a pleasing nature, everything she did was consequently voted "peculiar, but so nice." Each of our friends in his or her own field went on sowing and watering the good seed. No child even was considered too small or insignificant to reach. "Inasmuch," continued the motto of "the sandwich."

The Desmond Mission School was no longer held in a hall. A pretty, though tiny chapel had now reared its head and walls at the self-same corner where Teddy had stood one Sunday deliberating before he ran away, and thus made the acquaintance of Dr. Thorne. John went one evening to give "a talk" in the chapel. The place was crowded, and his words were eagerly listened to by the workingmen and their wives.

"That's what I like," remarked one of the latter, at the little sermon's close. "There ain't no words there but what a body can understand."

"That's so," said another. "An it wasn't too long. I didn't see anybody was fallin' asleep over it."

Morrison overheard the words, as he and John paused

to shake hands with those in the congregation who claimed the privilege.

"A good criticism upon my own efforts," he said. "I'll make my sermons shorter hereafter."

"St. Paul understood his congregation's humors, I fancy," returned John. "Did you ever stop to think how every word tells in Paul's epistles? Nothing superfluous, but every sentence full of meaning. It was the same with our Saviour's sermons."

"A thought worth pondering," answered the other.

One more scene and we may leave our friends. No tale can be *finished* until its hero's life comes to a close. A good life is never ended.

It was at "Craggs," where Laura and her husband had come for a few days. John Walton was with them. Laura, with tender touch, was "fussing" over the root of a transplanted wild flower.

"Do you know, John," remarked the minister, "seeing Laura do that reminds me of yourself."

"In what way?"

"I always think of you as a rare plant. The gardener unfortunately, did not treat you rightly, and you were sent off into a—well, let us call it a field. Then Desmond discovered your grand possibilities, almost vanished away; Thorne was called in to aid in the transplanting; up in Fern Ridge you had the best of care. Then came the result of it all—yourself, as you are now."

"A beautiful fancy," said Laura. "Yet I think you



How the Gardens Grew.

made a mistake in saying John was planted wrongly at first. It was through his misery then that he gained the experience necessary for his life's fruition."

"Our Gardener never makes mistakes."

They both looked at John. His face seemed glorified for the moment. Then a dreamy look came into his eyes.

"I shall be satisfied when I behold the King in his *beauty*. *That* is fruition," he said.

THE END.

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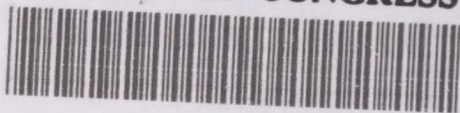
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